

MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

September, 1961

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ANTIGONE'S SONG AS "MIROUR" IN CHAUCER'S *TROILUS AND CRISEYDE*

By SISTER MARY CHARLOTTE BORTHWICK, F.C.S.P.

"Mirour of goodlihed"—thus is designated the lover praised in the "Troian song" of Antigone in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (II, 827-75).¹ "Mirour," in this case, signifies "paragon" or "model," one of the meanings of *speculum* developed probably under Augustinian influence in the Middle Ages.² Actually, the descriptive image "mirror" might be used, both in its modern sense and with some of its many medieval connotations, for the song itself. In establishing this fact, we shall come to a fuller understanding of the song and of its place in the whole poem, and we shall have a glimpse of what may have been the way Chaucer worked out the plan of the song.

Upon a first reading, the song may seem no mirror but transparent crystal through which shines the pure joy of love expressed by the song's composer, "the goodlieste mayde / Of gret estat in al the town of Troye" (880-81), and made more luminous by the singing of "Antigone the shene," her voice so clear "That it an heven was . . . to here" (824-26). The lady of the song offers to Love all her heart's desire as tribute, for he has sent no one "So blisful cause" as her to lead her life "In alle joie and seurte" (827-33). The reason for her well-being is her love for one who is most attentive and devoted in her service (834-40); he is the very source of all desirable qualities—"worthynesse," "trouthe," "goodlihed," "wit," "sikernes," "vertu," "lust" (841-44). She has only the god of Love to thank for all this bliss and for the growth in virtue that accompanies love (848-54). She will ever love her "owen knyght," for her heart has grown so firmly in him and his in her "that it shal evere laste" (869-73). All seems bright and shining here.

A mirror, on the surface, may glitter, too; but the dark, opaque backing is necessary to give it its reflective quality. A closer reading of the "Troian song" reveals that the shadow is not missing. Not everyone agrees with this rosy picture of love, the songstress admits; there are some who say that "to love is vice, / Or thraldom" (855-56). Of course, she dismisses these demurrers as either envious or extremely ignorant or powerless to love because of their wickedness (857-59); but we become aware, and know that she is aware, that not all have found in love the bliss that she has. She argues well that just as the sun is no worse though a man because of the feebleness of

¹ *Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F. N. Robinson (Cambridge, Mass., 1957). Lines from Book II of *Troilus and Criseyde* are hereafter designated by line number only.

² Sister Ritamary Bradley, C.H.M., "Backgrounds of the Title *Speculum* in Mediaeval Literature," *Speculum*, XXIX (1954), 105.

his eyes cannot look upon it, so love is no worse "though wrecches on it crien" (862-65); but she follows her argument with a statement amounting to an admission that the joys of love are not without alloy: "No wele is worth, that may no sorwe dryen" (866).

In the very enumeration of the virtues of her lover, we may detect a trace of imperfection—he is not absolutely without fault, but "leest with harm desteyned" (840); and the emphasis upon security—she has cause to live in "seurte" (832-33), and he is the "stoon of siker-nesse" (843)—reminds us of the basic insecurity of the lovers' position under the code of courtly love, not only because of the illicit nature of their love in many cases, but because of the inability of human love to fill the supreme and final place allotted to it under that code. The ending—"Al dredde I first to love hym to bigynne, / Now woot I wel, ther is no peril inne" (874-75)—although superficially it brushes away former fears, startles us with the use of the words "dredde" and "peril" at the close of this lay of apparent lighthearted joy; and the final negative clause leaves us with the impression that the singer is not really so assured as she has seemed.

This double aspect of the song relates it to a concept of "mirror" commonly associated with literature from the Middle Ages even into the eighteenth century, that of the mirror as a reflector of the object both as it is and as it should be.³ In this sense Antigone's song might be called a "mirour" of love.

The love celebrated in Antigone's song is courtly love as understood and used in his writing by Chaucer. The whole scene in which it occurs is of a romantic cast. Muscatine notes that in the scene of Criseyde's pondering just preceding the garden scene Chaucer for the first time shifts from the naturalistic technique in his portrayal of Criseyde to the conventional technique of the French romance. "Then follow the song, the description of the coming of evening, the singing nightingale, and Criseyde's dream, the sequence in which the poem comes closest to pure romance."⁴ Kittredge would assign as source for the song a work of a French poet who wrote in the tradition of the troubadours—the *Paradis d'Amour* of Guillaume de Machaut.⁵ Kittredge warns, however, "This is not a case of translation, or even of imitation, but rather an example of adaptive mastery." His suggestive list of comparisons, in which thirty-five of Chaucer's forty-nine lines are paralleled with 109 lines of Machaut ranging back and

³ Bradley, p. 100.

⁴ Charles Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition* (Berkeley, 1957), pp. 157-58.

⁵ G. L. Kittredge, "Antigone's Song of Love," *MLN*, XXV (1910), 158. As Robinson notes, Karl Young and Emil Koeppel had formerly presented differing views. Young suggested a part of Troilus's song in the *Pilostrato* as source: *Origin and Development of the Story of Troilus and Criseyde* (London, 1908), p. 174; Koeppel saw similarities to Gower's 44th *Ballade*: "Kleine beiträge zur englischen litteraturgeschichte: 1. Gower's französische balladen und Chaucer," *Englische Studien*, XX (1895), 156. Writers subsequent to Kittredge have usually taken his theory for granted.

forth between lines 1 and 198 of the *Paradis d'Amour*, is some indication of the extent of the adaptation.⁶ We may expect to find in the song, then, ideas drawn from the courtly love tradition, probably suggested by Machaut, but freely used by Chaucer to fit his own views and needs.

The form of the song, that of a hymn of thanksgiving to the god of Love who is conceived as a feudal lord, reminds us at once of two aspects of the courtly love system: its aspect as a religion of love and its aspect as a feudalization of love.⁷ The theme of religion is developed on one level in the singer's address to the "blisful god" whose favor is alone responsible for her fortune in love, and in love's effecting in her the banishment of sin and growth in virtue. On another level the religion of courtly love prompts the devoted service of her knight who possesses the traditional virtues of the courtly lover. The feudal motif appears in her offering to Love herself as "humble subjiit" and her "hertes lust to rente," as well as in Love's title, "lord." All her joy and security rest upon the love of her knight which she is sure "shall evere laste." In all of this the song reflects courtly love "as it is."

There are, however, important differences between Chaucer's picture and courtly love as described by C. S. Lewis and A. J. Denomy. The lover depicted in the song does not appear to be Lewis' abject lover for whom "obedience to his lady's lightest wish, however whimsical, and silent acquiescence in her rebukes, however unjust, are the only virtues he dares to claim";⁸ nor does the singer seem to be the haughty lady who would exact such obedience and administer such rebukes. Of the three basic elements of courtly love listed by Denomy—the superiority of and cult of the beloved, the conception of love as unsatiated and ever-increasing desire, and the ennobling force of love⁹—only the last named is prominent in the love of which Antigone sings. Although the knight is attentive to serve his lady well, she vows to love him faithfully, too; and the general impression is one of satisfaction and security, however ill-founded, rather than of restless desire. T. A. Kirby finds the singer's praise of love "in a spirit much akin to Andreas, who called it the 'fons et origo bonorum'"; but Kirby notes her departure from the code of the *De Amore* in her statement that she loves "withouten jalousie."¹⁰ The human love mirrored in Antigone's song is courtly love, but the approving emphasis is upon its noble and ennobling qualities as it habitually is in the works of Chaucer.¹¹

⁶ Kittredge, p. 158.

⁷ Frederick B. Artz, *Mind of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1953), p. 335; C. S. Lewis, *Allegory of Love* (Oxford, 1936), p. 2.

⁸ Lewis, p. 2.

⁹ A. J. Denomy, *Heresy of Courtly Love* (New York, 1947), pp. 20-21.

¹⁰ T. A. Kirby, *Chaucer's Troilus: A Study in Courtly Love* (Baton Rouge, 1940), p. 202.

¹¹ This aspect of Chaucer's treatment of courtly love has been remarked by many authors. Charles Muscatine bases his interpretation of *Troilus and Criseyde* in part upon the fact that Chaucer sees the faults of courtly love and the sanity of ordinary life, but also "prizes courtly idealism for its very real virtues"

Indirectly, however, a note of disapproval is also sounded. The starry-eyed teenager, Antigone, has no insight into the irony of the idealistic picture of human love lauded in her song; but the reader knows that no man is the "welle," the "grownd," the "mirour," the "roote," the "fynder and hed," of all the virtues attributed to the lover, that all sorrow is never in this life "ded," and that human love confided in as a source of all joy will inevitably fail its devotee. The mature Criseyde, listening to the song, knows this too. "Lord, is ther swych blisse among / Thise loveres, as they konne faire endite?" she sighs (885-86). She is never really convinced by Antigone, but she allows the words of the girl to work upon her, softening her in her attitude toward love (897-903).

The idea of the insufficiency of human love as an end in itself tends not to a merely negative conclusion. If romantic love cannot be relied upon as a source of everlasting joy, if human love will not of itself satisfy the heart of man, there is a love which can and will. If the human lover is not the well and root of all virtue, there is One Who is. The thoughtful reader cannot but be reminded by the hyperbole in the description of the lover (841-44) that there is only One Who merits the praise.¹²

A. J. Denomy has demonstrated that there are elements in the system of courtly love which could not have grown out of the Christian theological concept of charity.¹³ Nevertheless, it is extremely doubtful that in actual practice a poet like Guillaume de Machaut, for example, who was a canon at Rheims and who composed the music for a Mass as well as musical ballades and secular love lyrics, separated the ideas he derived from the current Neoplatonic philosophy from those dependent upon his knowledge of Christian theology and allowed only the former to govern his development of a love lyric. Certainly, Chaucer's practice combines ideas of courtly love with those of Christian charity, often in the way suggested by D. W. Robertson, Jr., when he offers the opinion that the ambiguity of the word *amor*, signifying either charity or cupidity, may account in part for the preoccupation with "love" in medieval literature.¹⁴ In Antigone's song the

and sees the futility of human activity without these values. *Chaucer and the French Tradition*, p. 131. D. S. Brewer demonstrates that Chaucer "nowhere celebrates illicit love," but habitually associates love and marriage. "Love and Marriage in Chaucer's Poetry," *MLR*, XLIX (1954), 461. C. S. Lewis comments that Chaucer and "the graver of his predecessors" so ennobled romantic love that it was qualified for use in literature of married love. *Allegory of Love*, p. 197.

¹² It is interesting that the figures for "source" in this passage ("welle," "grownd," "mirour," etc.) do not occur in Chaucer's "The Complaint of Venus," where F. N. Robinson notes a slight resemblance to lines 841 ff.; and that Kittredge found no parallel for the passage in the poem of Machaut. F. N. Robinson, ed., *Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, p. 820; Kittredge, p. 158.

¹³ A. J. Denomy, "An Inquiry into the Origins of Courtly Love," *Mediaeval Studies*, VI (1944), 188-91.

¹⁴ D. W. Robertson, Jr., "Doctrine of Charity in Mediaeval Literary Gardens: A Topical Approach Through Symbolism and Allegory," *Speculum*, XXVI (1951), 28.

possibility for such a double interpretation is most noticeable in the first and fourth stanzas (827-33, 848-54). The prayer of thanksgiving to the god of Love could as well be directed to the God of Love. In the context of courtly love, the word "grace" (831) refers to the favor of the god of Love; in the context of Christian charity, it may refer to the mercy of the true God.

For nevere yet thi grace no wight sente
 So blisful cause as me, my lif to lede
 In alle joie and seurte, out of drede.
 (831-33)

Kirby seems to misinterpret these lines when he says that the singer, "as a Christian sinner, likens it [love] to a redeeming grace which will save her from fear and lead her to all joy and security";¹⁵ but he thus recognizes the possibility of a Christian interpretation. I do not see how "grace" as the subject of "sente" can stand for supernatural grace, either actual or sanctifying; but "joie" as an abiding state of life with its accompanying "seurte" may well represent sanctifying grace. Denomy points out that the French *jois* was used by the troubadours to express the habitual state of joy engendered by or accompanying love.¹⁶ He is careful to reiterate that "charity and Courtly Love have nothing in common except that they may be considered as species of the generic concept of love on a par with Platonic love, mother love, *hyperdulia*, lust and so on"; but he suggests that the idea of grace may have provided the thought-pattern for that of *jois*.¹⁷

In lines 848-54 the lady of the song thanks the god of Love for love as a source of virtue.

Whom shulde I thanken but yow, god of Love,
 Of al this blisse, in which to bathe I gynne?
 And thanked be ye, lord, for that I love!
 This is the righte lif that I am inne,
 To flemen alle manere vice and synne:
 This dooth me so to vertu for t'entende,
 That day by day I in my wille amende.

Although Denomy makes it clear that the concept of love, even though it may be illicit and adulterous, as the source of all good cannot have originated in Christian thought,¹⁸ it would be strange if Chaucer, as a Christian poet, were unaware of the possible Christian application of these lines. The "righte lif" on this plane is the supernatural life, the life of charity. Growth in charity banishes sin. Love of God turns our wills toward Him and toward virtue and away from sin.

¹⁵ Kirby, p. 202.

¹⁶ A. J. Denomy, "Jois Among the Early Troubadours: Its Meaning and Possible Source," *Mediaeval Studies*, XIII (1951), 178-79.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

¹⁸ Denomy, "An Inquiry into the Origins of Courtly Love," pp. 175-92; *Heresy of Courtly Love*, p. 27.

Sister Mary Raynelda Makarewicz interprets the whole of Antigone's song as a description of "true" love. "The antithesis between true and false love is further illustrated in the love songs of Antigone and the nightingale. In the first there are echoes of the Apocalypse in the description of the perfect happiness in love known only to very few."¹⁹ The "antithesis" is not so simple. Although Eugene E. Slaughter becomes enmeshed in misinterpreted theological terms in his attempt to disentangle themes of earthly and heavenly love in *Troilus and Criseyde*, he rightly refers to Antigone's song as one of the passages in which occur "the intermixing, confusing, and blending of earthly lovers' emotions, moral standards, and ecclesiastical forms with those of Christian religion."²⁰ The result of this, we have shown, is that the song may be regarded as a minute medieval *speculum* showing love "as it is" in Chaucer's world of courtly love and "as it should be" according to his broader view that includes heaven as well as earth. In another sense the "Trojan" song may be considered a reflecting piece, mirroring the passages immediately preceding and following it.

Before Criseyde descends into the garden to walk with her nieces, she is occupied in solitary argument over the course she will take concerning Troilus. In the first part of her monologue (703-63), she considers the reasons why it will be to her advantage—and of no harm—to accept Troilus as lover. Then "A cloudy thought gan thorough hire soule pace, / That overspradde hire brighte thoughtes alle" (768-69), and in the following lines she reviews the objections to involving herself with love (771-805). It is this last part of her soliloquy that is reflected in reverse in Antigone's song. So close is the correspondence between Criseyde's objections to love and Antigone's answers to these objections that it seems possible that Chaucer wrote the "Trojan" song with Criseyde's argument in mind, and that in the last two stanzas of the song he followed a passage of Criseyde's monologue, systematically refuting it point by point. This would not necessarily rule out Machaut's poem as the source for Antigone's song, but it might explain Chaucer's choice of material from the French poem and his arrangement of it.

To Criseyde's question, "Sholde I now love, and put in jupartie / My sikernesse, and thrallen libertee?" (772-73), Antigone replies that love is cause for her to live "In alle joie and seurte" (833), that her lover is a "stoon of sikernesse" (843), that those who call love "thralldom" do not know what it is (855-59). To Criseyde's picture of love as a stormy life in which there is "For evere some mystrust or nice strif" (780), Antigone's answer is that "withouten jalousie or strif" she loves "oon which that is moost ententif / To serven wel" (837-

¹⁹ Sister Mary Raynelda Makarewicz, *Patristic Influence on Chaucer* (Washington, D.C., 1953), p. 132.

²⁰ Eugene E. Slaughter, "Love and Grace in Chaucer's *Troilus*," *Essays in Honor of Walter Clyde Curry* (Nashville, 1954), pp. 63-64, p. 64 note.

39). To Criseyde's statement that "Ther loveth noon, that she nath why to pleyne" (777), the whole of Antigone's song gives the lie.

The last two stanzas of Antigone's song (862-75) answer in sequence the ideas of a passage in Criseyde's monologue (780-91). It may be significant that Kittredge found no passage in the poem of Machaut that might have inspired nine (862-68, 874-75) of these fourteen lines of the "Trojan" song.²¹ The other five lines pledge faithful love and describe the exchange of hearts that was common enough to have appeared in Chaucer's lyric without specific inspiration.

For evere som mystrust or nice
strif

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>(A) Ther is in love, som cloude is
over that sonne. (780-81)</p> <p>(B) Therto we wrecched wommen
nothing konne,
Whan us is wo, but wepe and
sitte and thinke; (782-83)</p> <p>(C) Oure wrecche is this, oure owen
wo to drynke. (784)</p> <p>(D) Also thise wikked tonges ben so
prest
To speke us harm. (785-86)</p> <p>(E) ek men ben so untrewē,
That, right anon as cessed is hire
lest,
So cesseth love, and forth to love
a newe.
But harm ydoon is doon, whoso it
rewē; (786-89)</p> <p>(F) For though thise men for love
hem first torende,
Ful sharp bygynnyng breketh
ofte at ende. (790-91)</p> | <p>(A) What is the sonne wers, of
kynde right,
Though that a man, for feeblesse
of his yen,
May nought endure on it to see
for bright? (862-64)</p> <p>(B) Or love the wers, though
wrecches on it crie? (865)</p> <p>(C) No wele is worth, that may no
sorwe dryen. (866)</p> <p>(D) And forthi, who that hath an hed
of verre,
Fro cast of stones war hym in
the werre! (867-68)</p> <p>(E) But I with al myn herte and al
my myght,
As I have seyde, wol love unto my
laste,
My deere herte, and al myn owen
knyght,
In which myn herte growen is so
faste,
And his in me, that it shal evere
laste. (869-73)</p> <p>(F) Al dredde I first to love hym to
bigynne,
Now woot I wel, ther is no peril
inne. (874-75)</p> |
|--|---|

The lettered passages in the second column can be read as replies to the correspondingly lettered sections in the first. The use of the "sonne" image in both the A sections, the repetition of "wrecched," "wrecches" in the B sections, and the alliteration of "w" as well as the similarity of the final words in the lines lettered C increase the impression that one passage may have inspired the other.

²¹ Kittredge, p. 158.

To read as a reply to Criseyde's argument lines 862-68 of Antigone's song is to make reasonable a juxtaposition of lines that otherwise seems strange. Lines 862-65 follow one another in perfect logic. Just as the sun is not of its nature the worse because a man of feeble eyes cannot look upon it, so love is none the worse because wretches complain of it. A moment of thought is required to connect this with the next line, "No wele is worth, that may no sorwe dryen." If we think of a "wrecche" as an unhappy person, however, we can see the relationship. The "wrecches" that complain of love do so because of their unhappiness in it, whereas they should be able to endure some sorrow in order to merit the joy of love. Although we can arrive at this understanding from the passage in the song itself, the lines of Criseyde's complaint, in which "wrecched" clearly refers to women unhappy in love, make the transition easier. The leap to the next two lines seems impossible in the light of just the lines of the song. He who cannot endure sorrow deserves no joy; therefore, let him who has a glass head beware of stones cast in battle! Skeat and Robinson both explain the obvious proverbial meaning of lines 867-68, but neither of them offers any light upon their relation to the line preceding. Read as a reply to Criseyde's objection about "wikked tonges," however, the lines have meaning related to the context. Those unhappy in love must be patient in order to merit its joy, avoiding gossip about others in love since they themselves may expect a return to love's favor and will then be themselves butts for gossiping tongues.

Section F of Column 2 is a striking reversal of the similarly lettered section of Column 1. This ending of Antigone's song echoes exactly Criseyde's fearful position at the moment it is being sung. As was noted above, although it seems to be an expression of assurance, there is a tone of doubt in it. This is true also, it seems to me, of the ending of the preceding line, "that it shal evere laste." Our awareness that romantic love cannot last is strengthened by the use of the same word, "laste" (which here means "endure") to mean "end" in line 870.

This shadow of foreboding is repeated in a number of ways in the passage following—in the mention of fiends in hell and Criseyde's silence following it, in her remarking the speed with which night is coming on, in the elaborate stanza to describe the setting of the sun after which "white thynges wexen dymme and donne," and in the description of the eagle of Criseyde's dream "fethered whit as bon" with his "longe clawes."

The nightingale's lay of love is an obvious reflection of Antigone's song. I see no more reason to equate it simply with false love than to consider the "Trojan" song a portrayal only of true love. It echoes for Criseyde the song of her niece and reinforces its influence upon her. The dream about the eagle imitates the passage in the song about the exchange of hearts, but in imagery that presages evil.

Throughout the garden scene, with the passages preceding and following it, much attention is given to the sun and to bright or white

things as contrasted with shadows, clouds, darkness. This imagery again reminds us of the mirror with its glittering, bright side and with its darkened side necessary to make it a reflector.

In a number of senses, then, Antigone's song may be considered a "mirour," depicting in little the attitudes toward love which will govern the development of the whole poem and reflecting the action and imagery of the passages preceding and following it. The merit of thus viewing the song is a fuller comprehension of its significance in itself and in relation to the rest of the poem. By regarding it as a reply to Criseyde's objections to love, we may clarify the meaning of some passages of the song and perhaps gain a new insight into the source of the sequence of ideas, if not of the ideas themselves.

Fordham University

AN EXAMPLE OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PATHETIC TRAGEDY: ROWE'S *JANE SHORE*

By ALFRED SCHWARZ

When Nicholas Rowe first came to the stage, in 1700, he stood virtually alone in the field of tragic dramaturgy. On May 1, 1700, Dryden died; Otway and Lee had been dead for many years; and Congreve as well as Southerne, though they lived on, gave up writing for the stage in the same year.¹ Rowe was, therefore, without a serious rival. Two years later he had so much become the talk of the town that he was singled out for attack by the author of *A Comparison between the Two Stages* (1702),² who was indignant over the "mighty Reputation" of Rowe's second tragedy, *Tamerlane*, for he could never consent to range this play among some of those by Shakespeare, Dryden, Lee, or Otway. The comparison, though negative, ought to have been flattering to the young playwright. His first two experiments in tragedy had so pleased the town that the professional critic felt it to be his responsibility to put an undiscerning audience in its place and to rank these new productions according to their true worth.

This twofold reaction to Rowe's work continued like a set pattern throughout his playwriting career. All of his seven tragedies proved to be successful when they were first produced, yet all seven were collectively damned in Gildon's *New Rehearsal* (1714).³ And the great popularity which some of them, particularly *The Fair Penitent* (1703) and *Jane Shore* (1714), enjoyed for at least a hundred years to come indicates that neoclassical criticism in the field of drama championed a losing cause. Certain important points of difference between popular taste and the pseudoclassical ideal were vigorously debated in Rowe's lifetime and over his own productions. I take *Jane Shore* to be the clearest and most interesting case in point.

In the development of the drama, Rowe's was an age of transition. A new, increasingly middle-class audience sat in the theaters of the early eighteenth century and made its demands felt in the repertoire. Therefore, Rowe was always in search of a tragic formula which would satisfy the shifting preferences of the playgoing public. Evidently he gauged the trend in taste for the most part correctly; for in an age when the serious drama had to compete with the "rival"

¹ Southerne's next play, *The Spartan Dame*, did not appear until 1719, the year after Rowe's death.

² Ed. Staring B. Wells (Princeton, 1942), p. 101.

³ *A New Rehearsal; or, Bays the Younger* (London, 1714). A reissue appeared in 1715 to which was prefixed *Remarks on . . . Lady Jane Gray*. The new volume was entitled *Remarks on Mr. Rowe's Tragedy of the Lady Jane Gray, and all his other Plays*, second edition (1715).

attractions of comedy, opera, pantomime, and a variety of unclassifiable spectacles, his record of seven successful tragic productions is remarkable.

At first he experimented cautiously, retaining many conventions of the heroic Restoration tragedy of the last age while introducing gradually—to begin with, only in single scenes—a note of pathos. But his modifications of the heroic formula in his first two plays, *The Ambitious Step-mother* (1700) and *Tamerlane* (1701), are significant only in the light of his later, more radical, deviation into a genre of his own. Though he was attracted early in his career to Otway's pathetic tragedies, he could not as yet achieve a comparable psychological realism, touching what he considered to be the master passion of modern tragedy, Pity. In Otway's mature tragedies, the situations are, to be sure, artificial, as they are in Rowe's work, but the passions are genuine, not sentimentalized. Only much later in his career did Rowe learn to draw this distinction.

By 1703 he had sufficiently sounded the theatrical inclinations of the town to venture an experiment in an as yet undefined genre: the drama of "private woes" or domestic tragedy. In *The Fair Penitent*, in which he adapted the subject of Massinger's *The Fatal Dowry* for the theater of his day,⁴ he turned for the first time away from the conventions of the heroic stage; instead, he tried various means to gain a fully sympathetic response to his pathetic theme. Characters diminished to a nearly normal size replace the consciously heroic figures, and an emotionally charged rhetoric supplants the bravura speeches of another generation of heroes. There is generally less noise, and there are more tears. In fact, the protagonist is a woman whose sorrowful fate, in this first so-called "she-tragedy," served at once to appeal to the sensibilities of a bourgeois audience and to point a moral, an effective warning against conjugal infidelity.

The audiences of Queen Anne's day no longer wanted the artificialities of the heroic drama, but rather a setting and a situation which were nearer to their own experience; still, they demanded a certain nobility, if not of rank, at least of character, and a stage eloquence which would be sometimes imposing and admirable, at other times sentimental and moving. Even in his treatment of *Tamerlane*, Rowe had acceded to this demand for a mixture of effects. But he came to understand that if the sympathy of the spectators were to be engaged in an altogether pathetic subject, then improbable situations and distant locations and times, such as the romantic heroic drama depended upon, would not do. Nothing must interfere with the possibility of identification with the characters and a sympathetic participation in their troubles. Apparently, Otway and Rowe succeeded in satisfying this desire for a combination of effects; for next to Shakespeare's, their tragedies, *The Orphan*, *Jane Shore*, *Venice Preserv'd*, and *The Fair*

⁴ See Donald B. Clark, "An Eighteenth-Century Adaptation of Massinger," *MLQ*, XIII (1952), 239-52.

Penitent, were among the half dozen most admired and most popular in the eighteenth century.⁵

In his masterpiece, *Jane Shore*, Rowe found the type of tragic drama which suited exactly the popular taste of his age and which best represents it to the modern reader. After reverting twice to the semi-heroic fashion,⁶ he turned his back even more resolutely both on the outmoded formula of the heroic stage and on the rules and norms in tragic writing demanded by the neoclassical critics. Possessing a formulated theory of tragedy, the more conservative critics naturally abused both the popular playwright and the new audience that applauded his plays.

With the production of *Jane Shore*, Rowe's popularity as a tragic poet was unrivaled. Only Addison's *Cato*, produced the year before, had outstripped his record run of nineteen nights.⁷ Rowe's success was, however, the more admirable because the drama did not engage factions or party loyalty, a factor which played no small role in keeping *Cato* on the boards for a month. Careless about those "rules" which made *Cato*, in the eyes of most contemporary critics, a model tragedy, he won the sympathy of his audiences for the sufferings of his repentant sinner. This trend in taste continued, and during the course of the century the popularity of *Cato*, though still considerable, was definitely overshadowed by that of the leading pathetic family tragedies.⁸

In the choice of his subject matter, Rowe did not exactly follow his own recommendation, announced as early as 1700, in the prologue to his first tragedy, that the modern stage ought to exploit the grief and love of "Antient Heroines." Then he was thinking mainly of "Greek

⁵ Between 1702, when theatrical advertisements began to appear in the *Daily Courant*, and 1776, when Garrick retired from the stage, this was the order of Restoration and eighteenth-century tragedies according to the approximate number of performances: *The Orphan*, 314; *Tamerlane*, 282; *Jane Shore*, 279; *Oroonoko*, 272; *Venice Preserv'd*, 269; *The Fair Penitent*, 261; *Cato*, 226. This is part of a list made by Emmett L. Avery; see "The Popularity of *The Mourning Bride* in the London Theatres in the Eighteenth Century," *Research Studies of the State College of Washington*, IX (1941), 115-16. *Jane Shore* and *Cato* appeared more than a decade after the starting point of this count; still, they are far up on the list. *Tamerlane*, on the other hand, would hardly be in second place, were it not for the fact that, especially in the latter half of the century, the play was performed automatically on the 4th and/or 5th of November, but only rarely at other times. At any rate, apart from Shakespeare, Otway and Rowe clearly dominate the tragic stage.

⁶ In *Ulysses* (1705) and *The Royal Convert* (1707).

⁷ During the months of February and March, 1714. The first performance was advertised in the *Daily Courant*, January 31, 1714, and in the following issue tickets for the first two benefit nights were advertised for sale at the principal coffeehouses.

⁸ See note 5, above. Dr. Johnson, in his *Life of Rowe*, writes of *Jane Shore*: "This play, consisting chiefly of domestick scenes and private distress, lays hold upon the heart. . . This therefore is one of those pieces which we still welcome on the stage." Lessing, too, reflects the popularity of the pathetic, bourgeois tragedy. In his preface to the translation into German of Thomson's tragedies (1756), he expresses his preference for *The Merchant of London* over *Cato* because it is a more moving tragedy.

and Latian Beauties," who suited the conventional royal types of the heroic theater. But when he designed his last two plays, his heroines were English (Jane Shore and Lady Jane Gray);⁹ and since he had already experimented with the pathetic possibilities of the domestic drama, their loves and private misfortunes became the central themes of these plays. Apparently, the producers and the publishers of *Jane Shore* stood to gain by a tragedy on such a well-known subject, for they conducted an elaborate advertising campaign to introduce the new play and to profit by its extended run.¹⁰

Rowe provided the correct dramatic bill of fare for the playgoer of 1714, a compromise between the semiheroic historical style and the domestic tragedy. In *Jane Shore* he found a heroine whose life afforded pathetic scenes of a domestic character, as well as scenes involving noble personages and public affairs. London is the background of the play—the Tower and the court for the public scenes, and a street with Shore's house and neighboring homes for the domestic scenes. Such a familiar setting alone helped bring the action nearer to the interests of the audience.¹¹

And in his effort to appeal directly to the feelings of his audience, he deliberately disregarded the dramatic "unities." This was a bold step; he thereby did not merely break a mechanically applied rule of dramaturgy, but he challenged the alleged rational basis for the rule: probability. The spectacle of a woman starving to death in the course of an afternoon, if it were coolly considered, would tax the credulity of the most lenient spectator. But Rowe trusted his own gifts as dramatist and poet to create the illusion of reality. In the last act he painted Jane Shore's agony of body and mind in such strong and affecting colors that few spectators would be reminded at that moment of the illogicality of the situation. And apparently he succeeded in appealing to the imagination and in engaging the emotions of audi-

⁹ He probably knew the tragedies of John Banks—*Anne Bullen* and *The Innocent Usurper*; or, *the Death of the Lady Jane Gray*—based on English history with a heroine dominating the action.

¹⁰ According to the *New Rehearsal*, there were players who admired Rowe greatly and "cried up" the play two months before its first production; besides, he had some "accidental Helps to Expectation" from the booksellers who, hoping to profit by his name, published "five or six sorts of *Lives of Jane Shore*. This brought all who had bought the *Lives*, and secur'd all who use to come to Plays" (p. 85). The British Museum Catalogue lists several biographical pamphlets about Jane Shore, all published in 1714, and "Very necessary for the Readers of her Tragedy," as Curll, the bookseller, put it. Perhaps the most popular of these lives was the *Life and Character of Jane Shore* (1714). There were two editions before the initial performance, and after an extended run at the theater, a third edition was advertised in the *Post Boy* for March 16-18. It was meant, as the dedication frankly tells us, "to Light up Candles for the Tragedy of *Jane Shore*."

¹¹ Warton, in his *Essay on Pope*, 5th edition (London, 1806), said that *Jane Shore* had probably become the most popular and pleasing tragedy of all Rowe's works, because it was founded on "our own history." He wished that the contemporary authors would more frequently search the annals for dramatic subjects, for "the Turks, the Persians, and Americans of our poets, are, in reality, distinguished from Englishmen only by their turbans and feathers; and think and act, as if they were born and educated within the bills of mortality" (I, 272).

ences for more than a century, so that, contrary to the opinion of the critics, their reasoning faculties were for the time being virtually lamed.

The advantage which he gained by his loose handling of time and place was the natural sequence with which the scenes could follow one another toward the appointed end. There was no necessity of forcing the plot with unexpected entrances and unmotivated exits, with sudden scene drawing and overlong narrative exposition. And yet he achieved the economy and concentration of the neoclassical tragedy on the French model. He made the misfortunes of Jane Shore the focal point and, in the manner of the best tragic writers before him, linked the political issues of the day with her private history. The play stands apart from the average productions of the time by its skillful construction and the unusually natural tone of its dialogue.

Gloster, the Protector of the Realm, and his trusted friends, Catesby and Ratcliffe, open the play with an expository résumé of the current political situation. We recognize these figures from Shakespeare's *Richard III*. But in Rowe's play Gloster has a subordinate role; he is therefore properly subdued. The modern poet charges him with an excess of ambition and a general unscrupulousness in attaining his ends, yet the fiendish qualities of the Elizabethan Richard are de-emphasized, as they should be. Gloster serves only as the powerful, however impersonal, instrument of Jane Shore's destruction.

Of greater consequence is the role of Hastings, the one nobleman whose loyalty to Richard's cause must be doubted, for though he bows to the Lord Protector, the Duke of Gloster, he would never do so to King Richard. But there is another side to this staunch man; he has a tragic fault:

A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she,
Shall make him amble on a Gossips Message,
And take the Distaff with a Hand as patient
As e'er did *Hercules*. (I, i)

His partiality toward the worthless Alicia and then toward Jane Shore proves his downfall as much as does Gloster's arbitrary tyranny. Rowe interweaves skillfully Lord Hastings' private affairs with his fatal loyalty to the royal children of the dead King Edward.

According to history, Jane actually became Hastings' mistress after Edward's death; in fact, later she yielded also to the Marquis of Dorset, and put thoughts of marriage even into the mind of a sober magistrate of Richard's reign.¹² But Rowe's heroine was to be an example of extreme penitence and moral redemption, one whose

¹² See Thomas Rymer's *Foedera* (1704-1713), for a proclamation of Richard (October 23, 1483) against "Thomas, late marquis of Dorset [who] lived in actual adultery with the wife of Shore" (XII, 204). The magistrate is Thomas Lynom. Harleian MSS 433, Article 2378, contains a letter of Richard concerning his solicitor, Thomas Lynom, "marvelously blinded and abused with the late wife of William Shore."

change for the better could yet not save her from the consequences of an unchaste life. Hastings' function, in part, is to demonstrate this point. He appears, therefore, first only as a friend who entreats Gloster to protect Jane from injustice; but afterwards, when, aroused by her undiminished beauty, he loses control of himself and misjudges the honesty of Jane's repentance, he meets determined resistance on her part and an unswerving resolution never again to commit the sin of adultery. Hastings (and incidentally the audience) finds a genuine sense of repentance where he had suspected only a surface show of remorse.

Indeed, from the beginning Rowe's Jane Shore appears with a "sad and sober Cheer," full of gentleness toward her friends and neighbors and possessing a premonition of the great suffering which she is to undergo. To her friend, Alicia, she confides her deep regret for her past liaison with the king, whose handsome figure might have charmed "impassive Spirits, and angelick Natures" (I, ii). But she is herself unwilling to accept the apology that it is impossible to resist the advances of a king, and especially of a youthful and handsome king like Edward. In this manner Rowe establishes from the start the complete change in Jane's character, her newly found moral strength which must, ironically, lead to her physical misery and final destruction. For her resolution, gained from true repentance, makes enemies of her so-called friends, so that, in the end, she stands alone in her suffering until, at the point of death, she finds release in the arms of her forgiving husband. In short, Rowe's characterization of Jane Shore and his construction of the plot to emphasize the irony of her fate are designed to move pity, if not fear. Pity, says Aristotle, is aroused by unmerited misfortune, and Rowe does his best to fulfill the definition.

Gloster is persuaded that the beautiful Mistress Shore has completely enmeshed Lord Hastings, that "This puling whining Harlot rules his Reason, / And prompts his Zeal for Edward's Bastard Brood" (IV, i). Therefore, he resolves, as a last resort, to force the unfortunate woman, under threat of utter ruin, to change Hastings' mind. She is agreeably surprised at the generosity and fearless loyalty of Hastings and steadfastly rejects all offers of liberty and renewed power. Again, there is constant reference throughout this scene to Jane's former good deeds, to her own generosity toward the poor and to her compassion for the afflicted, even in the days when her illicit liaison placed her in a position of virtually unlimited power.¹⁸

Obviously, her past behavior invites comparison with that of her opponent, of the tempter, who is in power now, and makes us see her former life as royal mistress in a far more sympathetic light. And as a preparation for her final agony, this insistence on Jane's uncommon generosity will sharpen the stings of ingratitude which she must

¹⁸ Heywood, in *Edward IV*, also puts this historical fact to good dramatic use.

endure in addition to her physical suffering. Her ordeal in this scene ends with Gloster's pronouncement of her punishment: stripping her of all remaining possessions and of all possible aid, he consigns her to die of exposure and starvation. She is now more sinned against than sinning, and she accepts the judgment with resignation, deeming her imminent suffering a just retribution for her past offense. Of course, an understanding with Hastings is now impossible. Unintentionally, Jane Shore is drawing him with her to perdition.

The last act of the tragedy is given over almost entirely to pathos; it describes and represents Jane's last days. The only other resolution which the plot demands is her recognition of her husband, who early in the play had taken service with her in disguise. Rowe has, so to speak, kept the entire action under a double aspect, since the audience knows that Jane's husband secretly watches over her; though he is a constant reminder of her past sins, his growing compassion for his unfortunate wife tends to augment ours. Dumont, or Shore, hears from a friend a description in pathetic detail of Jane's enforced penance, her meek behavior as she walks barefoot and with a burning taper in her hand through the crowd of jeering spectators who line both sides of the road to St. Paul's.¹⁴ Rowe liked to introduce such set pieces of descriptive verse in dramatic context, and they were generally praised for being vivid and moving yet "smooth" and elegant. The picture of Jane walking submissively in the center between officers and priests is well calculated to arouse in a susceptible listener the warmest compassion. Otway, says a contemporary review,¹⁵ who was a master in the art of moving the hearts of his audience, never drew a picture of sorrow in stronger or livelier colors. Then, Shore himself, by way of reply, gives a moving description of how King Edward abducted his fair wife.

The scene serves as an overture to Jane's actual appearance on stage, her hair hanging loose, her feet bare, and her features agonized. Rowe underlines the extremity of her suffering (she has been wandering for two days without shelter or food) with a sonorous imitation of Old Testament imagery in her opening speech:

Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, Oh! my Soul!
For are not thy Transgressions great and numberless?
Do they not cover thee, like rising Floods,
And press thee like a Weight of Waters down?
Does not the Hand of Righteousness afflict thee;
And who shall plead against it? Who shall say
To Pow'r Almighty, Thou hast done enough:
Or bid his dreadful Rod of Veng'ance, stay?
(V, i)

¹⁴ A historical fact. Blake illustrated the scene. Shakespeare's Duchess of Gloucester, in *Henry VI, Part Two*, goes through a similar penance: "Enter the Duchess barefoot in a white sheet, [with papers pinned upon her back] and a taper burning in her hand; with the Sheriff and Officers..." (II, iv).

¹⁵ *A Review of the Tragedy of Jane Shore* (London: J. Roberts, 1714), p. 22.

After being repulsed from the door of her false friend, Alicia, Jane sinks to the ground, exhausted in body and spirit, and in this condition her husband finds her on the street.

Rowe was known for his skill in handling scenes of tenderness. In the first few passages of this reconciliation scene, when Jane recognizes her husband, she expresses her horror and shame in excessively rhetorical lines. Apparently, Rowe could not or would not abandon the old style of self-conscious declamation. But presently the dramatist asserts himself again. He chooses a sentimentally valuable remembrance in order to suggest a reestablished intimacy between wife and husband:

Have you forgot
The costly String of Pearl you brought me Home
And ty'd about my Neck?—How cou'd I leave you?
(V, i)

And on the point of death, Jane looks upon her husband with the anxious eyes of a loving wife:

You're strangely alter'd—
Say, gentle *Bellmour*, is he not? How pale
Your Visage is become! Your Eyes are hollow;
Nay, you are wrinkled too—Alas the Day!
My Wretchedness has cost you many a Tear,
And many a bitter Pang, since last we parted.
(V, i)

Not until late in his career did Rowe learn the value of the short, expressive, dramatic sentence. Even Dr. Johnson, who never liked to speak of the pathetic in poetry, according to Mrs. Piozzi,¹⁶ recalled and applauded as particularly tender Jane Shore's last moving appeal, "Forgive me!—but forgive me!"¹⁷ as she expires in her husband's arms.

Evidently, when an accomplished actress played the title role, this spectacular tragedy was bound to attract audiences. Mrs. Oldfield enacted this part in the first performance,¹⁸ and Rowe himself is said to have coached her. She had many notable successors during the course of the century, for the part of Jane Shore offered a challenge to all rising actresses. Mrs. Siddons' performance appears to have been sensational.¹⁹ Since the notable success of *Jane Shore* helped to

¹⁶ G. B. Hill, ed., *Johnsonian Miscellanies* (Oxford, 1897), I, 283-84.

¹⁷ Joseph Warton, one of the most perceptive critics of the century, contrasts the heartfelt passages in this scene with the many florid speeches that are, in his words, inconsistent with the state and situation of the distressful personages who speak them. Of Jane Shore's moving exclamation, he writes: "These few words far exceed the most pompous declamations of *Cato*." *Essay on Pope*, I, 269-71.

¹⁸ See William Egerton, *Memoirs of Mrs. Anne Oldfield* (London, 1731), p. 53.

¹⁹ If we believe Doran's *Annals of the English Stage*, ed. Robert W. Lowe (London, 1888), III, 161, Mrs. Siddons acted "with such effect that not only were sobs and shrieks heard from the ladies, but men wept like children, and

establish the fashion of domestic and pathetic tragedy, the play may be regarded as a test case, for it illustrates the transition, despite the critics' objection, from the well-made tragedy after the French and heroic pattern to the frankly pathetic tragedy using chiefly native characters and settings and inviting commiseration and tears.

The paradoxical contrast between the popularity of *Jane Shore* and its unqualified condemnation by the chief critic of Rowe's work is so striking that an examination of at least the major points of disagreement between critic and author seems to be in order. It may be best to consider simultaneously the attack of the *New Rehearsal* (1714) and a contemporary defense of the tragedy, *A Review of the Tragedy of Jane Shore* (1714),²⁰ in which the major points of criticism are answered. This procedure will illustrate the disparate theories of tragic drama in that age of transition.

The authorship of the *Review* is unknown, but if Rowe himself did not write it, the author was a man who sympathized thoroughly with Rowe's unorthodox ideas on dramatic composition. From the start the writer echoes Rowe's contempt for the ill nature of literary critics. And he proceeds to attack the three unities, a critical dogma the least neglect of which put them into a temper:

I ever look'd on these Niceties as a pure piece of Mechanism, which are to be attained without Genius, Spirit, or any Thing beside that makes a Poem admirable. I am satisfied the Author of the Play before me consider'd them in this View, and thought it not worth his Care to make a laborious Contrivance for the Preservation of these Rules, and the Pleasure of the Critics. . . . Many a heavy Page of *Aristotle's Poetry* will be objected to our Author, and want of Art and Literature sworn upon him. . . . But leave we these Men of *obscure Diligence*. . . . (p. 4)

The passage is significant as an express rejection, at this early date, of a generally still respected rule, though an ever-increasing number of literary men felt it to be cumbersome and useless.

Actually, the chief object of the critic's attack was Rowe's choice of a heroine, since she was not considered fit for tragedy. "A Whore profess'd, is no Tragic character," says the *New Rehearsal*, "*Incontinency* in Woman being on the same level with *Cowardice* in Man" (pp. 69-70). Phaedra, for example, has all the reluctance of a woman of honor. In Euripides, her criminal passion was a punishment inflicted by the Gods, though Seneca and (Edmund) Smith have debased her. It is clear from the argument that the critic cannot countenance the introduction of any unheroic or undignified character. Nor can special circumstances, like the strength of the temptation and the natural weakness of the offender, make a vicious character

fainting fits. . . . were long and frequent in the house." On the other hand, Walpole refers to "poor fat Mrs. Pritchard in *Jane Shore*" (quoted by J. R. Sutherland in his edition of *Three Plays by Nicholas Rowe* [London, 1929]); undoubtedly, Walpole thought of her reciting the words, "I have not eat these three Days."

²⁰ Consisting of *Observations on the Characters, Manners, Stile, and Sentiments* (London: for J. Roberts, 1714).

the object of pity.²¹ In fact, had Jane Shore been innocent of adultery, she would still not qualify as a tragic heroine, for her station in life was too low: a shopkeeper's wife "never can rise above the Soc."

Hence, there is not the masculine Terror and the noble Pity which a genuine tragic theme can arouse. The theater is rather given over to idle commiseration and to the free use of lace handkerchiefs for an ignoble woman in distressful circumstances. Here the critic has touched on the key question in the establishment of the pathetic and unheroic tragedy. In order to effect the necessary sympathy with the misfortunes of the central character, it became essential to minimize the distance between him or her and the audience. Otway, Southerne, and Rowe, the trio of playwrights who wrote the most significant plays in this fashion, moved down a step from the noble protagonists of the heroic theater. With Lillo, of course, the process of degradation went even further.

There is something to be said for the critic's resistance to the obvious tendency in the theater to cater to an audience blindly susceptible to any kind of sentimental appeal. Thus, in order to make his point, he tries to prove that Jane Shore is really undeserving of sympathy. Her penitence may move our joy, he says, but it may never touch our compassion. And that she would not yield to Gloster's design, in other words, that she would not be guilty of a more enormous wickedness than her former, is not any more sufficient to move our compassion. Indeed, Rowe is doubly at fault, since he makes her virtue, and not her vice, produce her misery. It is, of course, precisely that ironical circumstance which is conducive to full sympathy in the modern sentimental sense; but our critic will have none of it.

The *Review*, on the other hand, defends Jane Shore as a tragic heroine. A character must be seen under a divided view, asserts the author; it must be vicious in some part and virtuous in others in order to be suitable for the tragic stage. This is obviously an attempt to counter the moralistic strictures of the *New Rehearsal* with an appeal to a pseudo-Aristotelian principle distantly related to Chapter XIII of the *Poetics*. Thus, Jane Shore abounds with generosity, tenderness, and affability: "The Harlot is in some Parts of her Character a Saint." Furthermore, a vicious person, that is a qualified one, may, and does, deserve pity; for the vice, though it be the most immoral and pernicious, may have "some abatements from common or peculiar Accidents," as it does in the case of Rowe's heroine. True, she is an adulteress, but her fellow offender is a monarch, an insinuating and powerful lover. As for Jane's low station in life, the reviewer points out, it does not prevent Rowe from making her as vivid and effective a moral example as characters of the highest distinction could be.

²¹ One of the ballads which Rowe knew, *The Woful Lamentation of Jane Shore* (included in the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* [London, 1775], II, 258; the original is in the Pepys collection) also condones Jane's sin on account of Edward's irresistibility.

The end of tragedy being the improvement of conduct through "the Representation of triumphant Virtue, or afflicted Guilt," the poet has been able to "interest the Passions strongly in the Favour of one, and the Dislike of the other."²²

Both writers, it appears, buttress their arguments with the appropriate critical rules. But the real conflict between them is not over technicalities; it has to do with a larger question. The *New Rehearsal* judges the play formally by the neoclassical standards of good play-making; the critic derives his authority from a fairly coherent system of dramatic theory. The *Review*, however, though it agrees on certain essentials, like the moral end of tragedy, refuses to admit that certain principles are generally applicable and defends the play on its own terms; the reviewer, in effect, appeals to the judgment of the independent spectator. In this way, he can justify the neglect of the unities and of the rules of decorum. Rowe himself uses the same approach. In the prologue he reveals the models which he kept in view as he wrote the tragedy and names the dramatic effects which he hoped to gain from his subject and from his novel treatment of it. He has chosen an old tale which, he says,

Hath never fail'd of melting gentle Eyes:
Let no nice *Sir* despise our hapless Dame,
Because recording Ballads chaunt her Name;
Those venerable ancient Song-Enditers
Soar'd many a Pitch above our modern Writers:

Our Numbers may be more refin'd than those,
But what we've gain'd in Verse, we've lost in Prose.
Their Words no shuffling, double-meaning knew,
Their Speech was homely, but their Hearts were true.

Rowe's main concern, obviously, was to stir the passions, to affect the sensibility of the spectators, and it was for this reason also that he tried to "imitate" Shakespeare, or, as he says in the prologue, to keep "the mighty Bard in View." The notation on the title page of the play, "Written in Imitation of Shakespear's Style," ought not to be interpreted narrowly as an attempt to reproduce Shakespeare's characteristic poetic style, but rather more generally as an attempt to abandon the conventional formalistic mode of tragic composition and, by allowing a freer rein in the construction of the drama, after the model of Shakespeare, to gain a more direct approach to the hearts of the audience. This is Rowe's version of "immortal" Shakespeare's art:

By no quaint Rules, nor hampering Criticks taught;
With rough, majestick Force he mov'd the Heart,
And Strength, and Nature made amends for Art.
Our humble Author does his Steps pursue,
He owns he had the mighty Bard in View;

²² *A Review*, pp. 5, 6-7. The *Review* summarizes the foundations of the drama in general terms before exemplifying their application in Rowe's play.

And in these Scenes has made it more his Care
To rouse the Passions, than to charm the Ear.
(Prologue)

This is a sufficiently plain statement of Rowe's purpose. Therefore, the critical debate over his ability to write Shakespearean blank verse and to imitate Elizabethan idioms is beside the point. Because he does try, particularly in the role of Gloster, in which he cannot forget the Shakespearean model, to introduce some Elizabethan phraseology and generally colorful and obsolete expressions into his elegant and typically modern verses,²⁸ the word *style* has been taken literally to mean diction, rather than in a broader sense to mean also the whole manner of dramatic composition.

The acknowledged debt to Shakespeare suggests that, during his work on the edition of Shakespeare and on the introductory critical *Account*, Rowe must have stopped to reconsider certain principles of dramatic composition. And we may well attribute to Shakespeare's example some of the "innovations" in Rowe's tragedy, such as the native setting, the calculated neglect of the unities, the logical development of the action, the natural handling of the characters, and, for the most part, the conversational tone of the dialogue—in short, the liberation in general from the dictates of the labored heroic formula and the rigid demands of the conservative critics. Liberation is probably an exaggerated term, for the design of the tragedy is still regular and its presentation formal. It were better, therefore, to say that Rowe has loosened, rather than freed himself from, his allegiance to the typical Restoration formula for high tragedy.

But therein lies the importance of his whole playwriting career, culminating in *Jane Shore*. His most popular plays furnished a necessary link between the Stuart writers of pathetic and domestic tragedy, on the one hand, and the modern writers of bourgeois tragedy, on the other. He kept alive the tradition and established it more firmly by breaking away, in time, from the heroic drama and by popularizing the "she-tragedies" with their pathetic heroines. Independent also of the strictly neoclassic critics, he showed the way back to a loosely defined, yet distinct native tradition.

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²⁸ The *New Rehearsal* does not fail to attract attention to this weakness. It charges his "imitation" with being "a sort of *Motley*, *Linsey Wolsey* Stile, *Gloster* has, by his *Holydame*, and *St. Paul*, and many of *Shakespeare's Words*, but the rest speak generally in the Stile of the Moderns" (p. 77).

MATTHEW ARNOLD: BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

By ALBERT J. LUBELL

Students of Arnold have generally recognized the crisis of faith that overtook him in his early years as an important experience. How could they see it otherwise, one immediately adds, and then goes on to wonder whether they have not taken it too much for granted, without stopping to evaluate its crucial importance for the young poet's development. While Arnold's so-called "unknown years"¹ were shrouded in virtually complete obscurity, one had little or no means of seeing the determining character of that experience. With the publication of the Arnold-Clough correspondence,² however, and the more recent publication of Arnold's *Notebooks*,³ and with the sizable amount of critical scholarship done on him in the last quarter of a century, Arnold's shedding of Christian dogma in his early years may be seen in better perspective. If, as has been said, he "seems, indeed, to have shed his orthodox beliefs, with few of the usual struggles,"⁴ that may well be true in the sense that at the time the struggle did not seem to have any serious visible effect upon his work and behavior. Quite early in life, Arnold was able to oppose to the world a public personality that successfully masked the real one. Actually, under the guise of the gay, insouciant manner of a near-dandy,⁵ however, the struggle was indeed deep-seated. Briefly, it may be said—and I shall attempt to demonstrate here—that Arnold's shedding of Christian dogma determined the whole course of his intellectual and spiritual development.

As an isolated phenomenon, this occurrence would be nearly impossible to explain; that is, it would be almost impossible to explain why this loss of faith should have happened to the eldest son of "the great and good Thomas Arnold" in a household which breathed the very air of Christian piety. But, as is well known, the struggle of educated young Englishmen with their religious consciences in the thirties and forties of the last century was no isolated phenomenon. To go no farther than Matthew's immediate circle, there was his brother Tom,⁶ and there was Arthur Hugh Clough,⁷ Dr. Arnold's star boy at Rugby

¹ See Alan Harris, "Matthew Arnold: The Unknown Years," *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 113 (April, 1933), pp. 498-509.

² *Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough*, ed. H. F. Lowry (London, 1932); hereafter referred to as *Letters*.

³ *Notebooks of Matthew Arnold*, ed. Lowry, Young, and Dunn (London, 1952).

⁴ Harris, pp. 499-500.

⁵ See Thomas Arnold, *Passages in a Wandering Life* (London, 1900), pp. 56-57.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 149 and Chap. VI, *passim*.

⁷ *Letters*, p. 23.

and for years Matthew's closest friend; there was Thomas Hughes, later the famous author of *Tom Brown's School Days* and a prominent Christian Socialist, and there was the well-known clergyman Arthur Stanley*—all of whom faced the religious struggle in one way or another.

But among university men generally, when their attitude toward religious questions was not altogether Laodicean, religious doubt and questioning could be said to be almost endemic. The influence of romanticism, which had infused a new vitality into English life and letters in the early decades of the nineteenth century, was slow to reach the Church, and what may be termed a de-spiritualization of that institution, which had set in during the latter half of the eighteenth century, continued into the early nineteenth, until the reaction came in the 1830's with the Tractarian or Oxford Movement.

The story of that movement is too well known to need much elaboration for my present purpose, and reference is made to it here solely as an important phenomenon in the intellectual milieu during the years when Arnold was coming to maturity. When his godfather, John Keble, in July, 1833, preached the famous assize sermon—generally considered the opening gun of the Tractarian Movement—he gave public expression to a ferment that had been going on more or less subterraneously for some time; for the gradual secularization of British life—which the political reform of the early 1830's further intensified—with its impact upon the relationship of Church and Government, had left not a few of the more sensitive young spirits, both in and out of the Establishment, emotionally and spiritually high and dry. Apart from their strong feeling for Church autonomy, what these young men were looking for in the Church was a deeper spirituality—a spirituality that paradoxically found an outlet in a renewed emphasis upon dogma and in a return to first principles as expounded by the early Church fathers.

Thus, on the subject of religious dogma, there was a division in the ranks of Church and university men into what may be termed, to use present-day political terminology, a right and a left wing: the former was represented by Keble, John Henry Newman (the undisputed chief of the Tractarians), R. Hurrell Froude, William Palmer, W. G. Ward, and Dr. Edward Pusey; the latter, by Arnold's brother Tom, Arthur Hugh Clough, James Anthony Froude (Hurrell's brother, whose *Nemesis of Faith* struck at the very core of Newmanism), many churchmen of the more "liberal" persuasion, and Matthew Arnold himself. On the sidelines, as it were, stood the prophet Carlyle, who spoke of the "petrification" of the British Church⁹ and whose influence upon the younger intellectuals such as Clough and Arnold

* *Passages in a Wandering Life*, pp. 149-50.

⁹ See the discussion of religion in early nineteenth-century England and of the Oxford Movement, H. V. Routh, *Towards the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1937), Chaps. IV and V, especially pp. 48-50.

was then paramount, proclaiming in thunderclap words his own vision of the metaphysical God. It should also be noted that the so-called left-wingers did not relapse into a wholly irreligious attitude. While Newman's way was not their way, each sought—and ultimately found—some sort of compromise, if not in the arms of the Church, at least within the embrace of conventional society.

Arnold's case, however, needs further clarification. We have little or no direct evidence from or about him¹⁰ regarding his inner life when he was still in his teens. But when years later, in one of his finest and best-known poems, "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," he says:

For rigorous teachers seized my youth,
And purged its faith, and trimm'd its fire,
Show'd me the high, white star of Truth,
There bade me gaze, and there aspire.¹¹

he opens a window upon his young soul. Of course, we have no means of knowing how far back the "youth" in the poem goes. But, while there is no reason to look for a Macaulayan precocity in the youthful Arnold, we may assume that the young poet who composed "Alaric at Rome" at eighteen and "Cromwell" at twenty-one, must have been, intellectually, quite alert even in his teens.

And who were the "rigorous teachers" who seized his youth, and what precisely is symbolized in "the high, white star of Truth"? For that period in his life, although, again, we may not speak with certainty, we may well conjecture that his teachers were, in the first instance, the authors of classical antiquity, from whom Arnold got his first lessons in naturalism; in particular, from such an author as Lucretius, whose *De Rerum Natura* is a poetical summation of ancient materialism, and who seems to have haunted Arnold on through middle life.¹² He may have read Spinoza during that period, although there is no evidence of such knowledge before 1850. And he undoubtedly read Goethe,¹³ either in the original or in Carlyle's translations or,

¹⁰ From a letter by a friend of Arnold's in his Balliol days—Edward Walford—quoted in *Letters*, pp. 23-24, we learn that on the occasion of Arnold's matriculation at Balliol, "when we waited in the Vice-Chancellor's ante-room for admission, Arnold professed to us his great aversion to sundry statements in the Thirty-nine Articles, which at that time we were all forced to subscribe, especially that article which expresses an approval of the Athanasian Creed. . . . I shall never forget how, in opposition to the Tractarianism of the day, he used to say that the strict imposition of creeds had done more to break up than to unite churches, and nations, and families. . . ." Arnold, however, had a genuine admiration for Newman—for his greatness of spirit rather than his message. See his beautiful tribute to Newman in *Discourses in America* (London, 1885), pp. 139-42.

¹¹ *Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry (London, 1950), p. 301; quotations from the poetry and from the Preface will hereafter be cited by page numbers in this edition.

¹² For a summary of Arnold and Lucretius, see *Poetry of Matthew Arnold: A Commentary*, ed. C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry (London, 1940), pp. 292-97 and pp. 340-47.

¹³ *Passages in a Wandering Life*, p. 57.

very likely, in both. As for "the high, white star of Truth," the context of the poem clearly shows that Arnold means the aspiring toward the kind of faith that may dispense with a base of supernaturalism.

We have a definite clue to the direction Arnold's mind was taking when he was in his early twenties. The unpublished pocket Diaries for the three years from 1845 through 1847, now preserved at the Yale University Library,¹⁴ contain not only numerous expense accounts and calendar datemarks, but also six telltale lists of authors whom Arnold planned to read and in some instances (as he indicated) actually did read during these years. These lists, with the exception of that for 1847, include primarily names of philosophers and, in some cases, certain of their characteristic works, with here and there a historian of philosophy thrown in for good measure. More or less in the order of the frequency of their occurrence, the philosophers Arnold names are Plato (who looms large), Descartes, Kant, Coleridge, Cudworth, Schelling, Berkeley, Mill, Plotinus, the poet-philosopher Lucretius, and Aristotle (only for the *Politics*).

It is not easy to determine—nor is it necessary for the present purpose—what it was Arnold was seeking in each of these philosophers. That Plato with his doctrine of the reality of ideas (not to consider his irresistible art) should have had a profound appeal for the young Arnold, bereft of religious faith, may be easily conjectured. In Descartes, one of whose works, the *Discourse on Method*, is listed three times, Arnold may well have been looking for a way out of his own morass of skepticism and for a solid philosophic ground on which to stand. German transcendentalism, represented by Kant, Schelling, and its British expounder, Coleridge—with its new vision of the primacy of Mind in Reality—may well have served a similar purpose for Arnold. Lucretius, interestingly enough, is not forgotten. Arnold was apparently also attracted by such diverse philosophic fare as Cudworth's modern version of Platonism, Berkeleian idealism, Mill's inductive system of logic, and the ancient offshoot of Platonism fathered by Plotinus. But what emerges clearly from Arnold's interest in all these philosophers is that he was looking for some sort of philosophic faith to replace the religious faith he had lost in his earlier years.

It is to be noted that all the philosophers appearing on the lists, with the single exception of Mill, represent, allowing for differences in time-spirit, that main branch of philosophic thought known as idealism; in fact, a roll call of the philosophers of this school through the ages would include few additional names as great as most of

¹⁴ For the privilege of examining these Diaries and other unpublished Arnold manuscripts, I am much indebted to Miss Marjorie Gray Wynne of the Rare Book Room at the Yale University Library. I am also profoundly indebted to the paper on these Diaries by Kenneth Allott of the University of Liverpool, which I had the good fortune to see before its publication. It was Allott's painstaking study of the six lists of authors and their works, with their interlocking relationships, that first enabled me to see the full critical importance of the philosophers listed for Arnold's intellectual development.

these. How, then, is this intellectual strain to be reconciled with the relatively crude, ancient materialism Arnold imbibed from Lucretius or even with the naturalistic pantheism he then or somewhat later learned from Spinoza? Merely to say that the young poet was eclectic in his philosophical taste would be a superficial answer. The fact is that philosophic idealism was a necessary complement to Arnold's nascent naturalism. In other words, in his revolt against religious dogma, Arnold quite obviously never lapsed into the scientific, or pseudo-scientific, materialism that became so fashionable in certain places in the post-Darwinian third quarter of the nineteenth century, and of which Arnold's friend Huxley became so popular a spokesman. The primacy of Mind in Reality—the basic tenet of idealism through the ages—became a dominant, if not consciously expressed, strain in Arnold's thinking, and it is this which constitutes the fundamental difference between him and a philosopher such as Huxley, as well as between him and empirically minded thinkers such as Mill and Herbert Spencer.

It seems scarcely necessary to say that, while Arnold at his best is a philosophical poet of stature, he was never, either by temperament or training, a philosopher. As his *Notebooks* attest, even his general interest in philosophy, at least in its more technical aspects, seems to have flagged in his later years.¹⁵ Nor are the strictures some critics pass upon him for a certain lack of rigor in his thinking¹⁶—a lack which a more thorough philosophic training might presumably have bolstered—without foundation. Writers of a philosophic cast of mind rather than philosophers—Goethe, Sénancour, Renan, Sainte-Beuve—claimed his attention more and more as he was maturing in his late twenties and early thirties.

But the philosophers of the 1845-1847 Diaries were to prove basic to Arnold's intellectual development. Their influence cuts far deeper than the mere echoes of their thought to be found in his work. Their

¹⁵ In the *Notebooks*, Plato still occurs, and there is an occasional reference to Spinoza, Cicero (of the *De Natura Deorum*), Locke, and Hume. But by far the greatest number of references are to the Bible and the *Imitation* and to such authors as Goethe, Sainte-Beuve, Renan, George Sand, and Arnold's favorite cleric, Bishop Wilson.

¹⁶ In particular, T. S. Eliot. In his *Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), Eliot, after a long and searching appraisal of Arnold's weaknesses and strengths as poet and as critic, has this to say: "Just as his poetry is too reflective, too ruminative to rise ever to the first rank, so is his criticism. He is not on the one hand, quite a pure enough poet to have the sudden illuminations which we find in the criticism of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats; and, on the other hand, he lacked the mental discipline, the passion for exactness in the use of words and for consistency and continuity of reasoning, which distinguishes the philosopher. He sometimes confuses words and meanings; neither as a poet nor as a philosopher should he have been satisfied with such an utterance as that 'poetry is at bottom a criticism of life.' A more profound insight into poetry and a more exact use of language than Arnold's are required." Yet, Eliot goes on to say, "The critical method of Arnold, the assumptions of Arnold, remained valid for the rest of his century" (pp. 114-15).

With the general tenor of this criticism of Arnold, the present writer is quite in agreement. But see below, note 29.

importance for Arnold lies, rather, in the fact that, as already suggested, the philosophic idealism he assimilated from these men proved to be the very warp and woof of his thought, and that, as such, it was in large measure instrumental in directing his growth away from the philosophic despair of the 1849 and the 1852 volumes of his poems to the emergent rationalism of the 1853 Preface and hence to the reconstruction of life and society of his later work.

Arnold seems to have sent forth both the 1849 and the 1852 volumes of his poems with some misgivings. He recalled both from circulation not long after they were published, and for his 1853 edition he rejected the title poem, "Empedocles on Etna," of the previous edition, which he restored, only at the urging of Robert Browning, in the 1869 edition. He must have realized that the prevailing mood of his poems, not to mention their doctrine, was inimical to the mood of expansive self-glorification characteristic of England of the mid-nineteenth century. This must have become crystal clear to him when the reviewers finished their insensitive, deadly work upon his small volumes.¹⁷

Reviewers apart, however, except for a few choice spirits like the young Swinburne, Arnold's early poetry met with little favor outside a circle of intimate friends. And no wonder. Aside from the often harsh, prevailingly unmelodic character of the verse, Arnold presented to his readers a bleak universe, indeed—in fact, a kind of mid-nineteenth-century "Wasteland"! Nothing like it, either in mood or doctrine, had ever appeared upon the British poetic horizon before. In poem after poem the young poet rings changes upon the general mood of resigned world-weariness often amounting to a cosmic despair: the unexplained nature of evil ("Myceus"), man versus an alien nature ("Empedocles"), man versus amoral nature ("Religious Isolation," "In Utrumque Paratus," "Morality"), consciousness of impending tragedy ("To a Gypsy-child by the Seashore," "The World and the Quietist"), the rejection of romantic love as an anodyne ("The New Sirens" and "The Voice"), a negation of the active personality ("Resignation")—to give but a few instances. But behind all this rather cheerless, negative, philosophizing is the somber intellectual backdrop of the young poet's loss of faith, that faith which, were it present, could light up his mental landscape and impart some positive meaning to his universe.

In the 1852 volume there was, in addition, the lost-love theme of the Marguerite poems with their mood of loneliness and resignation and their recurrent theme of the isolation of the human personality. Whether or not we believe with H. W. Garrod that the Marguerite poems dominate the 1852 volume,¹⁸ they certainly impart a note of

¹⁷ For a brief account, see Lionel Trilling, *Matthew Arnold* (New York, 1949), pp. 77-79.

¹⁸ See H. W. Garrod, *Poetry and the Criticism of Life* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), pp. 36-40.

wistful sadness to it. For it is now fairly well agreed that the poems are based upon a real—a poignantly real—experience. If so, they prove, alas, that Arnold was no Byron, nor was he a Wordsworth, who, as a young man in France, displayed a certain degree of courage in his emotional entanglement. On the artistic side, the lyricism discernible in these poems is rather above Arnold's average, thus perhaps adding internal evidence that Marguerite was a real person in Arnold's *Wanderjahre*.

But if any poem dominates the 1852 volume, it is the title poem, "Empedocles on Etna," as Arnold himself clearly saw when he rejected it for the next year's edition. Apparently undervalued, if not neglected, by Arnold's earlier critics, possibly because of the poet's own equivocal attitude toward it, it has had in the last two decades a number of able admirers and expositors.¹⁹ My chief purpose here is to analyze the poem's central philosophical import as an expression of the young Arnold's mind. The question of the Arnold-Empedocles identification need not detain us long. Certainly, it would be incorrect—and unphilosophical—to say that there is a complete identification between the poet and the philosopher of antiquity. It is also true, as has been amply shown,²⁰ that Arnold's Empedocles is not quite the Empedocles of antiquity. Perhaps the best way to express the relationship is to say that when he composed the poem, Arnold saw in the blurred image of the ancient sage a fitting vehicle for the view of the universe he then held. This, again, does not mean that we should logically expect Arnold to follow his symbol into the crater. In human life a way of living—or dying—does not necessarily follow from a given philosophical commitment, and in that respect most philosophers have been guilty—if that is the word—of a pragmatic acquiescence to the immediate demands of life, even though their philosophy warrants no such acquiescence.

The main theme of the poem is the man-versus-nature theme in its broadest application, or, more accurately, man, with his peculiar natural endowment—Mind—pitted against an alien, unfeeling, apparently uncomprehending universe. The poem also has two subordinate themes: man's acceptance of conventional society, as seen in the character of Pausanias, and man in the world's youth, as sung by Callicles, when an anthropomorphic universe offered man a haven of refuge. We first meet the exiled Empedocles in his "man-hating" mood, when he proceeds to preach, in a long chant, a lesson to his friend Pausanias, the conventional man, that the latter "may braver

¹⁹ The latest two are Paul F. Baum, *Ten Studies in the Poetry of Matthew Arnold* (Durham, N.C., 1958), pp. 122-36; and Walter E. Houghton, "Arnold's 'Empedocles on Etna,'" *Victorian Studies*, I (1958), 311-36. See also Douglas Bush, *Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry* (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), pp. 253-58; Trilling, pp. 85-88; J. D. Jump, *Matthew Arnold* (London, 1955), pp. 82-96; also Sturge Moore and Kenneth Allott both quoted in Houghton, p. 311, and note 1.

²⁰ See Houghton's excellent discussion of the Empedocles-Arnold relationship, pp. 312-14.

front his life." Ranging over the ills, errors, and vain dreams of man in a world he never made—a world which he thinks owes him what he calls happiness, but which in reality owes him nothing—the long discourse comes at the end to a stoic acceptance of life on its terms, not on ours, so that at least we may confront our existence with a fearless dignity:

I say: Fear not! Life still
Leaves human effort scope.
But, since life teems with ill,
Nurse no extravagant hope;
Because thou must not dream, thou need'st not then despair!
(p. 426)

But for Empedocles himself this will no longer do. He is weary of the world of men, and, what is worse, he is weary of himself and of his mind. That very mind that enabled him to see the Universe so clearly in Spinozistic terms is now nothing but a burden he would fain lay down. He does that symbolically when he puts down his laurel bough. Then, after recalling for the last time the period of his "Fullness of life and power of feeling" and addressing himself to the stars, to whom he at first mistakenly attributes his own deadness, after a long silence and a pause, he is ready to give his body to the elements. But one final question remains:

But mind, but thought—
If these have been the master part of us—
Where will *they* find their parent element?
What will receive *them*, who will call *them* home?
(p. 439)

And Arnold gives the answer in terms of Kantian metaphysics:

But we shall still be in them, and they in us,
And we shall be the strangers of the world,
And they will be our lords, as they are now,
And keep us prisoners of our consciousness,
And never let us clasp and feel the All
But through their forms, and modes, and stifling veils.²¹
(p. 439)

²¹ On this passage Houghton comments as follows: "To know the world only through the forms and modes of the logical mind is simply to continue the existence he is already leading, cut off, as by a stifling veil, from direct experience of man and nature, joyless, as he goes on to say, lifeless, homeless" (pp. 329-30). I must differ with this interpretation. It is not a question, it seems to me, of being cut off from "direct experience" by the "logical mind." It is rather a question of all experience being had through what we call mind. In other words, in this passage and in the lines that follow, down to line 389, Arnold is restating in poetical language the Kantian distinction between phenomena (things as they appear to mind) and noumena (things-in-themselves). As long as we apprehend reality at all, Arnold goes on to say, mind and thought will inhabit us and will be our lords in the sense that only through them can we be aware at all, and to this kind of awareness we are doomed for ever and ever. Coleridge called this mind that organizes experience the Primary Imagination, and Arnold must have been quite familiar with this master idea of Kant's both from the *Critique* and from the *Biographia Literaria*.

In the rest of the passage, which has been deservedly praised as the finest passage of blank verse Arnold ever wrote,²² and which, indeed, can stand comparison with the best philosophical poetry in English, the poet gives us his ultimate vision of Reality in the eternally recurrent mind-matter relationship as we know it in human form. Empedocles then adds that, while he has not always lived in the light of his own soul, "I have lived in wrath and gloom, / Fierce, disputatious, ever at war with man . . ." (p. 440). Yet he has "Sophisticated no truth, / Nursed no delusion . . ." (p. 441). He knows that "it hath been granted me / Not to die wholly, not to be all enslaved" (p. 441). In other words, he knows that part of him will live in eternity, and so, apostrophizing the flames—"Receive me! Save me!"—he plunges into the crater. The poem ends with a fine stroke of poetical counterpoint: the young musician Callicles, in a passage of exquisite lyricism, singing of Apollo and the Muses engaged in their eternal task of song.

Arnold thus ends the poem on a moral, human note, and Empedocles emerges as a philosopher-hero, a martyr, in a sense, to the tyranny of thought. But in the passage first cited, Arnold makes his philosophical position quite clear: his Lucretian materialism is tempered with an idealism either straight out of the "Critique of Pure Reason"²³ or, possibly, out of Coleridge's version of the Kantian metaphysics.

We shall take up the question of Arnold's critical rejection of "Empedocles" when we discuss the Preface to the 1853 edition of his poems. Meantime, let us notice briefly two poems which did not appear in the 1849 or the 1852 volumes, but which in theme and mood belong to that period (they were actually conceived then), since, artistically, they express Arnold's inner life at the time perhaps better than any of his other poems and are, therefore, most often remembered.

In both "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse" and "Dover Beach," the central theme is loss of faith in the modern world. In the former, the poet asks himself what he is doing in this Carthusian monastery, this relic of a dead past. "*What dost thou in this living Tomb!*" (p. 301), "the masters of the mind," address him. He assures them it is not to deny their truth that he is there. This monastery is not his spiritual home. But then neither is he at home in the noisy, teeming world of science and progress—a theme he was to develop in another of his most memorable poems, "The Scholar Gypsy." He is not without admiration for this world, mind you, but it is not for him. Perhaps, turning again to the world of religious

²² Jump, p. 93.

²³ See note 21 above. Arnold not only knew the *Critique*, which appears on his Diary lists several times, but also Herder's *Metakritik to Kant's Kritik*, which appears on one of his 1845 lists, along with the names of Plotinus, Schelling, and Coleridge.

faith, he can learn from it the secret of peace, which, wandering between the two worlds, he has sought in vain. Or, perhaps a new age will dawn, "Which without hardness will be sage, / And gay without frivolity" (p. 304).

"Dover Beach" is an expression of the poet's dilemma on a more personal plane. Here he uses the sea as a symbol of a once all-enveloping faith, but now he hears only

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

(p. 211)

In this poem Arnold turns to love, to a mutually trusting love, as some sort of haven from a world that "Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light, / Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain..." (pp. 211-12).

Whether "Dover Beach" is a great poem, as has been claimed,²⁴ may be open to question. That it stands very nearly at the top of Arnold's best poems few will deny. Nowhere, in fact, has Arnold expressed with such poignant clarity that "sad lucidity of soul" which is his special province in the domain of poetry. And in no other poem but this and the previously discussed "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse" has Arnold faced his central problem—the problem of religious faith in the modern world—so openly, so fearlessly, and, poetically, with such success. Though published after the 1852 volume appeared, these two poems may, therefore, be said to be the best poetical expression of the early phase of Arnold's development, before he began to lay the foundation for his reconstruction of life and society.

In this reconstruction, two of Arnold's lesser known essays would seem to be basic: the 1853 Preface to his *Poems* and the inaugural lecture, "On the Modern Element in Literature," delivered when he was elected professor of poetry at Oxford in 1857. When Arnold rejected the title poem of the 1852 volume for the forthcoming 1853 edition, he must have realized that in the last scene of "Empedocles" he had reached what was for him the extreme limit of philosophical speculation, that henceforth he must come back to life and mid-nineteenth-century reality. Actually, in accepting the position of an inspector of schools in 1851 and in marrying Judge Wightman's daughter in the same year, he had come back to life—to a life of heavy routine and taxing responsibility. Getting back to life for Arnold meant *ipso facto* getting back to literature, and in that process his classical heritage reclaimed him and tempered his romanticism to that characteristic blend of these two elements in his make-up which was to form the basis of his critical doctrine of later years.

²⁴ Jump, p. 81.

The 1853 Preface was, in the first instance, a restatement of the popular eighteenth-century doctrine: follow the ancients. Follow the ancients, said Arnold, first, in choosing an excellent action for a poem and, second, in subordinating the expression of the parts to the poetical character of the whole. And what constitutes an excellent action? For not all actions are equally worthy of representation; an intrinsically inferior action cannot be made equally delightful with an excellent one by its treatment. Arnold's answer consists in wedding the central doctrine of the Aristotelian poetics to Schiller's conception, which he quotes, that "all art is dedicated to Joy." An excellent action is one that will "most powerfully appeal to the great primary human affections: to those elementary feelings which subsist permanently in the race, and which are independent of time" (pp. xix-xx); hence, the date of an action signifies nothing. But a poetical work must also be capable of affording the highest enjoyment, the kind of enjoyment, for example, one may derive from contemplating a truly tragic situation. There are situations, however, from which no poetical enjoyment can be derived.

They are those in which the suffering finds no vent in action; in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, unrelieved by incident, hope, or resistance; in which there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done. In such situations there is inevitably something morbid, in the description of them something monotonous. When they occur in actual life, they are painful, not tragic; the representation of them in poetry is painful also. (p. xviii)

The situation of Empedocles, as represented by him, Arnold thinks belongs to this class of situations; hence, he excludes the poem from the 1853 collection.

This is Arnold the emergent classical critic speaking, and Aristotle would undoubtedly have agreed. For judged by the canons of classical tragedy, the situation in "Empedocles" is in truth "poetically faulty" in that it is merely painful and hence incapable of producing the kind of true tragic catharsis which only a proper action can produce. Arnold has thus espoused the classical ideal in poetry, and not only in this respect, but also in its subordination of expression (romanticist watchword!) to action and of the parts to the poetical character of the whole. Hence, even the influence of Shakespeare, the greatest of moderns, has not been an unmixed advantage to later generations of poets; for it is his unrivaled gift of happy, abundant, and ingenious expression that has aroused their admiration, often to the exclusion of the architectonic quality of his compositions as organized wholes. And Arnold takes issue with the modern critic who will prescribe a false aim for the poet with his dictum that "A true allegory of the state of one's own mind in a representative history is perhaps the highest thing that one can attempt in the way of poetry." What—"An allegory of the state of one's own mind, the highest problem of an art which imitates actions!" Assuredly not, says Arnold (p. xxiv), remembering Aristotle's definition of a poem.

Of course, there is a confusion here that Arnold, intent upon asserting the classical ideal, either did not see or did not think it necessary to clear up. As an aim, the modern critic's dictum may be false. A poem, or for that matter a modern drama or novel, is, to be sure, an imitation of an action. But it is also by its very nature an expression of a mind which, in greater or lesser degree, may well be an allegory of the state of that mind.²⁵ In other words, on this count there is no real conflict between the classicist's views of a poem and those of a romanticist. Each emphasizes a different aspect of the creative act, yet both meet in the creative synthesis which is the poem. Nor does Arnold espouse the classical ideal wholly and uncritically. He says further in the Preface that "the ancients with their comparatively narrow range of experience, and their widely different circumstances," cannot be our sole models (p. xxvii). What the modern writer may learn from them, better than anywhere else, is "three things which it is vitally important for him to know:—the all-importance of the choice of a subject; the necessity of accurate construction; and the subordinate character of expression." Above all, he will learn "how unspeakably superior is the effect of the one moral impression left by a great action treated as a whole, to the effect produced by the most striking single thought or by the happiest image" (p. xxviii; italics mine). That critical canon and all that it implies, it is important to note, became one of the foundation stones of Arnold's later criticism.²⁶

Another of Arnold's critical tenets is to be found in his Inaugural Lecture.²⁷ He begins with the idea that the peculiar demand of those ages which are called modern is for what he calls an "intellectual deliverance." There are epochs that have material greatness with adequate literatures to represent them; and there are epochs that are materially great, but whose literature is incommensurate with their greatness. Arnold then passes in review two epochs of classical antiquity: the Athens of Pericles and the Rome of Augustus. The former possessed, in its limited way, a great civilization and an adequate intellectual deliverance in Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Aristo-

²⁵ Cf. Baum: while "Empedocles" fails as a drama, as "an allegory of the state of his [Arnold's] own mind it was no doubt a powerful catharsis" (p. 136).

²⁶ Arnold's use of his famous "touchstones," which has been so much decried in recent years, does make sense in light of this canon of the superiority of effect "of the one moral impression left by a great action treated as a whole. . . ." When in his essay, "The Study of Poetry," for example, he quotes four lines from the *Chanson de Roland* and compares them with two lines from Homer, and then goes on to say, "We are here in another world, another order of poetry altogether. . . ." he is unconsciously making use of this critical canon. That becomes clear when he proceeds to give other specimen lines from Homer, Shakespeare, Milton, and Dante, and argues that these are characterized by "high poetic truth and seriousness" which is inseparable from "superiority of diction and movement." Arnold does not say here that this results from the superior "moral impression left by a great action," but the very examples he chooses would seem to make that assumption implicit in his argument. *Essays in Criticism*, Second Series (New York, 1924), pp. 16-22.

²⁷ *Essays in Criticism*, Third Series (Boston, 1910), pp. 35-83.

phanes. The latter, while possessing a great civilization on a far vaster scale than that of Periclean Athens, yet produced no literature adequate to its greatness. To take its three greatest names: Lucretius is "overstrained, gloom-weighted, morbid"; Vergil is melancholy; and Horace is wanting in seriousness.

It should be noted that implicit in all that Arnold has to say here about literature is what may be termed its social utility. A literature to be great must not only be interpretative, adequate; it must also be fortifying. It must not withdraw from life as Lucretius did; it must confront the spectacle of life's multifarious activity. That Arnold turned his back upon Lucretius is interesting at this point, for Lucretius professed to be a disciple of Empedocles and Arnold apparently had left Empedocles far behind. As stated above, in voicing the thoughts of the Greek sage before he plunged into the crater, Arnold must have realized that his own thought had come to a dead end. From then on he was to be on the side of life, as Van Wyck Brooks might say; and literature, unless it failed in its office, had to portray life in positive terms, with all its vigor and its color.²⁸

Arnold's assumption of the Oxford professorship of poetry was to mean his acceptance of a far greater role in British life, namely, his dual role as critic of literature and as critic of society. Never quite distinct, the two roles became one for Arnold, for more and more he tended to see literature as a social product, a product representing society's highest wisdom for self-guidance and spiritual self-renewal.

We have mentioned Arnold's espousal of the classical canons of form in poetry. But the espousal of a literary form is never just that; it inevitably carries a definite content with it. For Arnold this meant that literature was to become scripture, just as in his later writing on religion Scripture was to become literature. Seen in this light the phrase "high seriousness" that he used to characterize the greatest poetry becomes far more meaningful than ordinarily understood. And that other Arnoldian tag, "a criticism of life," as applied to poetry—which has aroused so much adverse comment because so often emptied of its true meaning—in this light takes on the meaning that Arnold intended.²⁹ For both phrases, like sparks struck off the anvil of his

²⁸ In his essay, "Arnold and Pater," *Selected Essays* (New York, 1932), T. S. Eliot argues that Pater's aestheticism "is the offspring of Arnold's Culture; and we can hardly venture to say that it is even a perversion of Arnold's doctrine, considering how very vague and ambiguous that doctrine is" (p. 354). It seems to me that Arnold's critical doctrine is sufficiently clear to make it quite different from its putative progeny. But see the searching analysis of Arnold's criticism in its relationship to the later criticism of Pater, Yeats, Hulme, I. A. Richards, Herbert Read, and T. S. Eliot, by William A. Madden, "The Divided Tradition of English Criticism," *PMLA*, LXXIII (1958), 69-80.

²⁹ Arnold makes quite clear what he means by the phrase. In his essay on Wordsworth, he says: "It is important, therefore, to hold fast to this: that poetry is at bottom a criticism of life; that the greatness of a poet lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life,—to the question: How to live." *Essays*, Second Series, pp. 143-44. See T. S. Eliot's comment on this in note 16. As a definition of poetry, or of its essence—which Arnold did not

mind, serve to light up Arnold's main conception that literature in general—and the supreme form of it, poetry, in particular—exercises its true function only in acting as a purveyor of the highest wisdom for society. As he was to say years later, in a world where religion, having materialized itself in the fact, having attached its emotion to the fact, now finds the fact is failing it, "in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay."²⁰

Arnold's social criticism in turn stemmed mainly from literary and philosophical sources. Not to undertake any discussion of it here but merely to indicate, at least in part, its intellectual basis, it may be said that Arnold's rationalist approach to social problems was an amalgam of his early naturalism overlaid with the idealism he learned from the philosophers of the period of his *Diaries*, to whom should be added, at least after 1850, Spinoza.²¹ Arnold's philosophical idealism may best be seen in the ever-recurrent theme in his social writings: the importance of ideas. Perhaps it has not been sufficiently noticed that his famous essay, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," with its plea for a "disinterested" criticism whose business it is "to create a current of fresh and true ideas," is essentially Platonism applied to the nineteenth-century literary scene. Again, in his religious writings, abandoning dogma and miracle, the twin pillars of religious orthodoxy, what is it Arnold wishes to rescue from the Bible for the use of modern man? Assuredly, it is its moral ideas and their viability for our daily living. Finally, he arrives at his doctrine of culture by insisting that social situations be evaluated in terms of certain ideals that have been discovered through the ages to express "the instinct in us for conduct, the instinct in us for beauty." Thus, his early naturalism never allowed Arnold in his later years to lose sight of facts, to undervalue what he called science. But his idealism, derived from Plato and the other philosophers of the *Diaries*, provided him not only with certain ideals of art and life, not only with a method of evaluating man and society, but also with a goal of aspiration in that the pursuit of ideas for their own sake he adjudged to be an ideal basic to all others.²²

In a letter to his mother, written in 1869, Matthew Arnold predicted that, while he did not have as much "poetical sentiment" as

necessarily intend—this utterance may leave a great deal to be desired. But it certainly expresses a very distinct, and very important, way of looking at poetry.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²¹ Allott suggests here also—and I heartily concur—the early shaping influence of Dr. Arnold's social views upon his son's social criticism, as well as the influence of Burke, whose idea of tradition and the "organic state" formed an important part of Arnold's thinking in this field. But a discussion of the sources of Arnold's social criticism might well be the subject of another paper.

²² Thus he thinks that Emerson is not a great poet, a great writer, a great philosophy-maker. But his relation to us is of "even superior importance." "He is the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit." *Discourses in America*, pp. 178-79.

Tennyson or as much "intellectual vigor and abundance" as Browning, "yet, because I have perhaps more of a fusion of the two than either of them, and have more regularly applied that fusion to the main line of modern development, I am likely enough to have my turn, as they have had theirs" (*italics mine*).³³ Arnold is speaking here only of his poetry as compared with the poetry of Tennyson and Browning, and for that prediction time has provided singularly weighty support. Is Tennyson's sentiment or Browning's vigorous optimism closer to us than Arnold's "sad lucidity of soul"? Few discerning readers of poetry today would answer that question in the affirmative.

But what Arnold says here of his poetry may be just as applicable to his work as a whole and to a comparison of himself with the other great Victorians. More than any of the others, he was acutely conscious of his "wandering between two worlds." More than any of them, he realized that the old world of myth, whether classical or Hebraic, was dead—dead, that is, as fact. But he also realized that the other world, the world being ushered in by science and industrialism, was "powerless to be born," in the sense that he could not envision a world without the ideals that the old faiths engendered. And it is his lifelong attempt to infuse fresh meaning into the ideals of the old faiths for his own day that touches our world more significantly perhaps than the work of any other of the great Victorians.

Arnold's attempt to recreate the old ideals covered four large fields of human endeavor: literature, religion, politics, and education. We have seen how from his youthful loss of faith in Christian dogma he went on to the bleak pessimism of his early poetry and a reading of certain ancient and modern philosophers. It was the philosophical idealism garnered from a reading of these philosophers which, combined with his earlier naturalism, provided the basis for his reconstruction of life in the four fields just mentioned. In literature, he infused a new vitality into the older classicism. In religion, he stated the new ideal as being morality touched with emotion. In politics, he espoused the ideal of a cultured democracy, holding the second term to be no less important than the first. And in education, he was the prophet of the ideal of a humanistic training for all who could profit by it.³⁴

In his writings in all these fields, critics have discovered confusions, timidities, and inconsistencies. Needless to say, thinkers have gone far beyond Arnold's conclusions in these fields to conform with new demands constantly arising in a society that grows ever more complex. But what we have called Arnold's rationalist approach to social problems, his tendency always to confront the new world with the

³³ *Letters of Matthew Arnold*, ed. George W. E. Russell (New York, 1896), II, 10.

³⁴ See W. F. Connell, *Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold* (London, 1950), especially pp. 273-81.

best of the old, has a distinct relevance for our time and for the future. Perhaps an even greater relevance in Arnold for our day consists in the fact that in the whole range of his work he showed that a world without faith in religious dogma need not be a world without the highest and most viable social ideals. In that, perhaps more than in anything else, Arnold's voice still speaks to us today in its characteristically persuasive tones.

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THE ARGUMENTS AND MOTTO OF *THE ANCIENT MARINER*

By STEWART C. WILCOX*

In his revisions of *The Ancient Mariner*, Coleridge struggled to make clearer the significances of the theme. The most obvious of these efforts is the gloss. Yet his alteration of the epigraphic Argument of 1798 for the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) and his subsequent addition of what is usually called the Motto from Thomas Burnet's *Archaeologiae Philosophicae sive doctrina antiqua de rerum originibus* likewise give the reader of *The Ancient Mariner* illuminating clues to its meaning. Of particular interest is the full passage from Burnet, for Coleridge both altered the order of and omitted passages from the *Archaeologiae Philosophicae*.

I. THE ARGUMENTS OF 1798 AND 1800

The original Argument of 1798 reads thus:

How a ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

The import of this Argument is geographical, for it describes the great arc of the voyage past the equator to the Pole and the great swing homeward. Thus it offers a clue as to the structural design of the voyage.

The Argument of 1800, however, reveals Coleridge's awareness that his readers would profit from further clues:

How a Ship, having first sailed to the Equator, was driven by Storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; how the Ancient Mariner cruelly and in contempt of the laws of hospitality killed a Seabird and how he was followed by many and strange Judgements: and in what manner he came back to his own Country.

In keeping with its romantic genre, *The Ancient Mariner* plunges into the middle of things.¹ Consequently, the killing of the Albatross is usually regarded as unmotivated, or otherwise explained by importing from the outside comparison to the Fall of Man. Yet the poem itself, I think, gives sufficient information about the killing to account for the Mariner's deed, even without resorting to the gloss

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¹ See R. H. Fogle, "The Genre of *The Ancient Mariner*," *Tulane Studies in English*, VII (1957), 122.

(added in 1817), which simply underscores that he had "done a hellish thing" by slaying the pious bird of good omen.

In the first place, then, the deed was "hellish"; second, it was "cruel"; third, it violated the laws of hospitality, laws which we have almost forgotten about today except in times of crisis or primitive emergency. As the poem continues, we progressively begin to understand the fuller meanings of the Mariner's spiritual blindness: he has failed to see with undistorted vision that the Albatross (which is also a daemon, a spirit that "loved the bird that loved the man") has its rightful place in the universal scheme of being in God. "Our enlightenment," as Humphry House says, "runs parallel with . . . [the Mariner's]."² Nevertheless, such anticipation of the theme should make us wary of overlooking what Coleridge does say prior to our full apprehension of the crime's consequences.

If a hellish act, cruelty, and inhospitality are not sufficient to account for the Mariner's criminal action, what further explanation is there? One answer, I believe, lies in a passage from "Religious Musings" and in Coleridge's interest in 1798 in the theme of Cain—guilt, punishment, expiation, and wandering.

In 1794 Coleridge wrote in "Religious Musings":

But that we roam unconscious, or with hearts
Unfeeling of our universal Sire,
And that in His vast family no Cain
Injures Uninjured (in her best-aimed blow
Victorious murder a blind Suicide)
Haply for this some younger Angel now
Looks down on Human Nature: and, behold!
A sea of blood bestrewed with wrecks where mad
Embatling Interests on each other rush
With unhelmed rage! (117-26)

This passage says that a murderer, who is heedless of God, commits spiritual suicide when he slays a brother human being. Now *The Ancient Mariner* states that the Albatross was greeted "And an it were a Christian soul" and was hailed "in God's name"; it ate and played when the Mariner called it; and it perched "on mast or shroud." We learn later in the poem that the seabird loved the Mariner, just as the Polar Spirit loved the bird. All of these facts, it should be remarked, appear in the texts of 1798 and 1800. Their purpose, clearly, is to symbolize the Albatross so that the Mariner's cruelty and inhospitality take on criminal and sinful coloring. He has killed a creature that loved him. His deed is not murder, but it does reveal a spiritual blindness whose consequences are morally as illuminating regarding the state of his soul as if he had slain a man. With such subtlety and speed does Coleridge start his action that the reader scarcely pauses to account for the Mariner's moral defection. To claim that this explanation of the Mariner's state of soul constitutes

² Humphry House, *Coleridge* (London, 1953), p. 98.

an explanation of his motives would, therefore, be to overlook Coleridge's narrative design. For purposes of romantic plot, Coleridge's remarks in the Argument of 1800 and his symbolization of the Albatross sufficiently account for the Mariner's spiritual lapse at the outset of the action. In addition, this handling of events avoids the sensational entanglements of actual murder without lessening the ultimate significance of the Mariner's sinful state. Sufficient unto the act is the evil thereof. Like Cain, he is doomed to expiate his guilt by being punished and wandering among mankind.

II. THE MOTTO

Both the gloss and the Latin Motto first became parts of *The Ancient Mariner* in 1817. Although E. H. Coleridge's Oxford edition indicates in a footnote to the *Rime* that the "Motto" omits sentences of the original Latin and changes the order of what actually is quoted, no one recovered these omissions until Kathleen Coburn included them in her edition of the notebooks.³ Here is Burnet in translation:

Often, moreover, from our very eagerness to increase our knowledge, we fall into mistakes; either because the mind comes to a hasty conclusion before the investigation has finished, or because of our great longing for an understanding of those things in which investigation can have no place. Without doubt, these things cannot be dealt with by our faculties nor by an enlightenment either given to us by nature or received from the heavens. Of this sort are those speculations about the Angelic World and its arrangement. Into how many divisions of the highest rank, into how many inferior classes is the heavenly hierarchy distributed: What do they do? What places do they inhabit? I readily believe that there are more invisible beings in the universe than visible and more ranks of Angels in heaven than there are fishes in the sea; but who will tell us the kinship of all of these; and the ranks, and relationships, and distinctions, and functions of each? The human mind circles round this knowledge, but never touches it truly. The heathen theologians philosophize much about the invisible world, of Spirits, Genii, Manes, Daemons, Heros, Minds, Noumena, and Gods. For evidence, see the work of Iamblichus on the Egyptian mysteries, of Psellus and Pletho on the Chaldean oracles, and everywhere in Platonic writers. Likewise some Christian Theologians follow them concerning the ranks of angels: and the Pseudo-Christian Gnostics, under the names of Aeons and Gods, invented many in this connection. Even the Cabalists in their own World of Angels muster thousands of Angels under the leaders Sandalphon and Metatron; just as is well known to students of those matters. But what do all these things signify? What of the true and verifiable is in this Seraphic Philosophy? I am not unaware that the Apostle Paul mentioned the Angelic world, and in it distinguished many ranks and kinds. But only in general; he does not philosophize concerning them. He neither teaches nor argues anything in particular: indeed, on the contrary, he thinks that those men who rashly intrude in these unknown and inscrutable things, as if they were conceited because of their varied learning, should be restrained. Yet there is profit, I do not doubt, in sometimes contemplating in the mind as in a Picture the Image of a greater and better world, that the mind habituated to daily details may not come into too narrow limits and settle down wholly on trifles. But truth must be guarded vigilantly, also, and proportion kept, that we may distinguish the sure from the

³ *Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Kathleen Coburn (London, 1957), note to 1000H 22.9.

uncertain, day from night. For it is the part of a wise man not only to know those things which can be known, but also to perceive and distinguish those things which cannot be known.⁴

Coleridge's familiarity with Burnet was early, for he envisioned translating the *Sacred Theory of the Earth* into blank verse. He must also have known the *Archaeologiae Philosophicae* before beginning the *Rime*, for he owned a copy, which is now in the Victoria College Library.⁵

Various critics from Lowes to Warren, Tillyard, and R. H. Fogle have adequately commented upon the ranks of visible and invisible beings which form the great chain or Neoplatonic celestial hierarchy.⁶ What the full text from Burnet does is to suggest, first, that the fishes in the sea were the prototypes of the watersnakes and, second, that Burnet's term "Seraphic Philosophy" prompted Coleridge to use seraphic angels instead of angels of a different kind. In 1798 the role of the seraph-band is simply to light the ship into the bay and wave silently to the pilot, pilot's boy, and Hermit.

In revision, however, Coleridge inspires the sailors' bodies with the angels so that the working of the ship and singing about the mast are heavenly, rather than merely supernatural. The combining of the pagan with the Christian in the *Rime*'s romantic framework becomes convincingly pneumatological and throughout its last three parts strengthens its major theme of the One Life. The use of Seraphim is especially appropriate, for their function as God's messengers is to cleanse spiritually with fire in the presence of light.⁷

⁴ This translation, which is my own, may be compared with that of Richard Mead and Thomas Foxton (1736); see *Notebooks*, ed. Coburn, 1000H-1000I. Cf. also J. L. Lowes, *Road to Xanadu*, revised edition (Boston and New York, 1930), p. 239. (The Motto itself has been translated by Woodberry, Bernbaum, and Griggs.) The angels Sandalphon and Metatron are described in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

⁵ See *Notebooks*, ed. Coburn, note to 1000H 22.9. After observing that the Motto is "From the 1692 edition of . . . Burnet . . .," Miss Coburn adds in her note: "Coleridge's copy, in VCL, opens readily at the page cited [68] because a sprig of *Artemisia absinthium* (L.) was put there by someone. Department of Botany of the University of Toronto which identified it assures me, although the age of the sprig is uncertain, that it appears old enough to have been put there by Coleridge himself. A few slight changes, and some omissions, are indicated by [. . .]. 'Quid agunt . . . habitant?' is Coleridge's addition."

However, in the Harvard and University of Oklahoma copies of Burnet's *AP* (second editions), the original Latin from which Coleridge derived the Motto does contain the phrase "quid agunt, quae loca habitant" (p. 93). Similarly, another University of Oklahoma copy of the *AP*, bound together with *The Sacred Theory* (1699), contains the phrase (p. 376). This evidence suggests that Coleridge may have copied the Latin into his notebook from his own edition of Burnet, but later consulted another before prefixing the Motto to the poem.

⁶ J. L. Lowes, *Road to Xanadu*; E. M. W. Tillyard, *Five Poems*; R. P. Warren, *A Poem of Pure Imagination: An Experiment in Reading*; R. H. Fogle, "The Genre of *The Ancient Mariner*," pp. 120-22.

⁷ Harry Morris, in "Some Uses of Angel Iconography in English Literature," *CL*, X (1958), 37, observes: "St. Bernard, as well as Dionysius and others, shows that the 'inflamed' angels are burning with love, and that to love is the function of the seraphim. . . ." Thus these angels function admirably both in the theme and in the imagery.

Coleridge's successive revisions of his poem, his replacing the original Argument with the one of 1800, and his use of Burnet's seraphic and daemonological lore, both in writing the *Rime* itself and also for the Motto, emphasize his Aristotelian concern for the design of the poetical action.⁸ He hoped his readers would suspend their disbeliefs by accepting physical miracles in a psychologically convincing story of sin, punishment, and redemption. The Motto and the poem both find an echo in *Biographia Literaria*: "It is the essential mark of the true philosopher to rest satisfied with no imperfect light, as long as the impossibility of attaining a fuller knowledge has not been demonstrated."

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⁸ B. R. McElderry, Jr., "Coleridge's Revision of 'The Ancient Mariner,'" *SP*, XXIX (1932), 37, mentions that the Mariner reassures the Wedding Guest by telling him that the bodies of the crew were animated not by their own ghosts but by spirits blest and accounts for the revision by calling it "a much less harrowing phenomenon." My comments are intended to complement this sound observation.

HISTORICAL RELATIVISM IN WIELAND'S CONCEPT OF THE IDEAL STATE

By JAMES A. McNEELY*

In contrast to most prominent writers of the German Enlightenment, Christoph Martin Wieland had a profound, intrinsic interest in the problems of society and government.¹ At the same time, he was endowed with a vivid sense of historical perspective, which enabled him to achieve a considerable degree of objectivity in his social and political thought.² Wieland himself was not unaware of the objective element in his writings. He was, in fact, extremely proud of it, and he often wrote—with characteristic self-irony—as if he alone had the secret key by means of which the events and personages of history could be properly evaluated.³ The words "geheime Geschichte" which he sometimes uses to describe his writings are to be interpreted in this sense—as if he is passing on to his readers the secrets of history which no one before him has been able to discover. In the preface to the work which, in the first edition, bears the title *Geheime Geschichte des Philosophen Peregrinus Proteus*, Wieland playfully alludes to his ability to project himself into the spirit of other people and other times:

* Read in abbreviated form before the German Section of the Tenth Annual Northwest Conference of Foreign Language Teachers, April 23-25, 1959, at the University of Idaho.

¹ See Friedrich Sengle, *Wieland* (Stuttgart, 1949), p. 262: "Treitschkes vielzitiertter Ausspruch, er [Wieland] sei 'der einzige unter unseren Klassikern' gewesen, 'der den Wendungen der Tagespolitik mit reger Teilnahme folgte', hat auch schon für diese Lebensphase Gültigkeit. Seine Skepsis, seine Kenntnis des Menschen... sein Umgang mit massgebenden Persönlichkeiten des öffentlichen Lebens, alles dies wirkt zusammen, um seinen politischen Urteilen eine Reife zu geben, die damals bei einem deutschen Bürger sehr selten war." Sengle's book constitutes, of course, a tremendous contribution to modern Wieland scholarship. For several reasons, however, some of which I shall state in subsequent notes, I am unable to agree with his view (p. 260) that *Der goldene Spiegel*, which has traditionally been considered Wieland's most important political writing, should not be taken too seriously. The best studies of Wieland's political thought, in my opinion, are still: Oskar Vogt, *"Der goldene Spiegel" und Wielands politische Ansichten* (Berlin, 1904); and Bernhard Seuffert, "Wielands Berufung nach Weimar," *Vierteljahrsschr. für Literaturgeschichte*, I (1888), 342-435.

² A total analysis of Wieland's historical thought has been attempted by Verena Meyer, *C. M. Wieland und die geschichtliche Welt* (diss., Zürich, 1944).

³ Miss Meyer interprets such claims quite literally. She regards Wieland as a typical rationalist, who believed he could achieve absolute objectivity in his evaluation of history. At the same time, she does recognize that there is an element of relativism in his historical thought: "Niemand gab häufiger zu, dass Irren menschlich ist, als Wieland. Darin liegt schon die Erkenntnis der Relativität menschlichen Denkens. Leidenschaften spielen bei unserer Betrachtung der Dinge hinein und trüben den Blick. Daneben hat aber Wieland die Hoffnung auf die Möglichkeit einer Elimination von Irrtümern. Er glaubt, die Dinge darstellen zu können, wie sie wirklich sind" (pp. 17-18).

Ich habe mich schon, bey einer andern Gelegenheit, etwas von einer kleinen Naturgabe verlauten lassen, die ich (ohne Ruhm zu melden) mit dem berühmten Geisterseher Swedenborg gemein habe, und vermöge deren mein Geist in gewissen Zeiten sich in die Gesellschaft verstorbener Menschen versetzen, und, nach Belieben, ihre Unterredungen mit einander ungesehen behorchen, oder auch wohl, wenn sie dazu geneigt sind, sich selbst in Gespräche mit ihnen einlassen kann.⁴

That Wieland was indeed highly competent to view the course of history objectively is nowhere more evident than in the series of essays on Rousseau, which Wieland published under the significant title of *Beyträge zur geheimen Geschichte des menschlichen Verstandes und Herzens*.⁵ No one either before or after Wieland has more clearly analyzed the motives which induced Rousseau to write his first treatise:

Ein Schauspiel, das die Menschlichkeit empört, wenn man es von der hässlichen Seite ansieht,—der Anblick der ausschweifendsten Uppigkeit und zügellosesten Verderbniss der Sitten in einer von den Hauptstädten Europens, in diesem modernen Babylon,—welchem ein Philosoph im siebenten Stockwerke, um seiner lebenswürdigen Narrheiten, um seiner artigen Talente, und auf den äussersten Grad verfeinerten Künste willen seine Laster nicht so leicht verzeihen kann, als der Philosoph zu Ferney—wenn er das Glück gehabt hat wohl zu verdauen—aus seinem kleinen bezauberten Schlosse;—der Anblick des Übermuts, mit welchem die verächtliche Classe der Poppäen und Trimalcione des öffentlichen Elends, dessen Werkzeuge sie sind, spotten;—der traugigmachende Anblick eines unterdrückten Volkes unter dem Besten der Könige—ist sehr geschickt, den Betrachtungen, welche der besagte philosophische Zuschauer über unsre Verfassungen, Künste und Wissenschaften anstellen kann, eine solche Stärke zu geben, ein schwermüthiges Helldunkel über sie auszubreiten,—dass man nichts anders nöthig hat, um zu begreifen, wie dieser Philosoph mit einer enthusiastischen Einbildungskraft, und einer mässigen Dose von Menschenliebe auf den Einfall kommen konnte: "Es würde diesem Volke besser seyn, gar keine Gesetze, Künste und Wissenschaften zu haben." (B., II, 13-14)

Wieland thus recognizes quite clearly that Rousseau's so-called system was the result not of calm reflection, but rather of a bitter emotional reaction to the social injustices and political abuses which prevailed in eighteenth-century France. Only from such a direct emotional attitude could a philosopher come to the conclusion that moral decadence and social inequality were too high a price to pay for the arts and sciences or, in short, for the entire civilization of modern society. What Wieland means to convey by this successful attempt to expose the psychology underlying Rousseau's savage philippic is that the observer who, like Wieland himself, regards the situation with the calm reflection which is derived from a sense of historical perspective will not allow himself to be misled into such an exaggerated view.

⁴ (Leipzig, 1791), I, 3-4. The other occasion to which Wieland refers in this passage is in the essay, "Eine Lustreise ins Elysium," written in 1787. See *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. J. G. Gruber (Leipzig, 1824-28), XL, 243-54; this edition will hereafter be abbreviated G.

⁵ (Leipzig, 1770)—in parenthetical references this work will be abbreviated B.

This revelation of the psychological motives which gave rise to Rousseau's system does not, of course, constitute a refutation of the system itself, and it was not intended to be understood as such. What prompted Wieland's interest in the psychological motivation of the first discourse was his need to explain to himself and to his readers how a philosopher of such obvious genius could have reached such an erroneous conclusion. Although Wieland is unable to accept Rousseau's system itself, he admires its brilliance and is willing to concede the validity of two of its main premises: that the primitive state may have been a happy one and that the arts and sciences have always constituted a threat to human happiness. He maintains, nevertheless, that it is neither possible nor desirable to keep a nation in the precarious state of cultural ignorance.

Accounts of primitive peoples abound in Wieland's writings. These accounts are frequently so idyllic that one is tempted to conclude that Wieland shares with Rousseau the rationalist concept that the simple, uncivilized peoples are much happier and better than their civilized fellows. Wieland's description of the valley of Jemal in the novel *Danischmend*, for example, follows completely in the tradition of the exotic paradise: "Es war ein langes, zwischen fruchtbaren Hügeln und waldigen Bergen sich hinziehendes Thal, Jemal genannt, von tausend Bächen und Quellen aus dem Gebirge bewässert, und von den glücklichsten Menschen bewohnt, die vielleicht damals auf dem ganzen Erdboden anzutreffen waren" (G., XVIII, 13).

Wieland does not enlighten his readers concerning the exact nature and the causes of this happiness. Only from the description of the corruption which occurs later is one able to draw conclusions about the original conditions. The first blow against happiness in Jemal is struck by three fakirs who introduce the *Lingam*. According to Wieland, the *Lingam* is a kind of amulet to which a certain sect of Hindus pay idolatrous honors. It is meant as a symbol of corruption, for with it superstition and ornamentation are introduced into the valley. The superstition, i.e., the belief that one can achieve happiness through the means of civilized society, undermines the instinctively happy way of life in Jemal. The ornamentation leads to envy, rivalry, and animosity among the women.

Discussions of the danger inherent in ornamentation are frequent in Wieland's writings. The most illuminating of these is probably to be found in the "Traumgespräch mit Prometheus," which also forms a part of the *Beyträge*. In this essay the significance of Pandora's box is discussed. Wieland believes that the contents of the box were merely cosmetics, which introduced the tendency to take appearances for reality and this in turn led to the end of naïve innocence and rectitude among the people whom Prometheus had created:

In kurzem wurde die Mode allgemein. Scheinen und Seyn, welche Eins seyn sollten, wurden zweyerlei: und weil es leichter war, gut, liebenswürdig, weise, tugendhaft, zu scheinen, als wirklich zu seyn, und weil es, zumal bey Kerzen-

licht, den nehmlichen Effect that: so bekümmerte sich niemand mehr darum, zu seyn, was er mit Hülfe dieser magischen Schminke scheinen konnte. (B., I, 267-68)

The inhabitants of Jemal must also pay for a similar failure to distinguish between appearances and reality, for with the introduction of the *Lingam* the basis of their happiness is destroyed. The *Lingam* is soon removed, but the harm has already been done. One further contact with the outside world is sufficient to make the corruption of Jemal complete. A dweller from the valley marries a dancer from the capital. From this time on, innocence and happiness cease to exist in Jemal. "Die Unschuld der Sitten, und eine glückliche Gewohnheit der unverwilderten, ungekünstelten und unverdorbenen Natur gemäss zu leben," were the elements which had kept the little republic in a better condition without laws, "als derjenige ist, welchen die vollkommenste Gesetzgebung einem Volke verschaffen kann, das schon so verdorben ist, nicht ohne Gesetze leben zu können" (G., XVIII, 148).

Despite the appreciation which Wieland shows for rural simplicity in his description of life in Jemal, it is not in such a life that his ideal is to be found. It is not by chance that he provides us with so little information about the original conditions in Jemal. He is less concerned with detailing the nature and the causes of the original happiness than with demonstrating how quickly and easily it can disappear. In this connection, the obvious contrast between the native inhabitants of the valley and Danischmend, the philosopher-landholder who lives among them, is of crucial significance. The former succumb to the corrupting influence of the *Lingam* almost immediately, whereas Danischmend is not affected by it at all, except in so far as it changes his environment. Wieland's criticism of the race which was so easily corrupted by Pandora's box may be justly applied to the people of Jemal:

Bey dem allen halten wir uns versichert, dass die Geschöpfe des Prometheus nach und nach um ihre ursprüngliche Einfalt und Unschuld gekommen seyn würden, wenn gleich Pandora und ihre Büchse nie gewesen wären. . . . Geschöpfe, deren Unschuld und Glückseligkeit von ihrer Unwissenheit abhängt,—wie er von den seinigen selbst gesteht,—befinden sich immer in einer sehr unsichern Lage. (B., I, 269-70)

The people of Jemal are, after all, little more than children. Danischmend would not wish to purchase the kind of happiness they enjoy at the cost of his enlightened condition. He is content with his life among them, but it would be wrong to maintain that he has become one of these simple people. The figure of Danischmend in Jemal follows completely in the bucolic tradition. He is a landholder, but everything seems to thrive so well that he needs to devote only a very small part of his time to the land, and for the rest can give himself up to philosophical contemplation. Like Danischmend, Wieland himself might have a certain feeling of well-being among such people, but only if permitted to devote most of his time to his humanistic

pursuits, to the acquisition of culture in an attempt to become happy and to make others happy.

Wieland's most valid argument against accepting the conclusions of Rousseau's system is to be found in an episode from the *Beyträge* in which Tlantlaquacapatli, an "eminent Mexican philosopher," traces the development of Mexican civilization back to its earliest origins. Koxkox and Kikequetzal, the hero and heroine of Tlantlaquacapatli's history, are discovered at the beginning of the episode in a presocial state of nature. Their life is depicted with the glowing colors of the idyl, as a mixture of pleasure, innocence, and love. This idyl, however, does not last long. Only one change is enough to transform happiness into unhappiness, namely, the association with others. When the two are joined by a third, their little community is soon destroyed by jealousy and violence. When later a few more women join the group, the restoring of the balance does not restore the former happy state. Promiscuous behavior results, signifying the end of love and thus of happiness in the community. It becomes entirely corrupt, and supreme happiness has been distorted into utter misery. This is the moral which Tlantlaquacapatli draws from the history and to which Wieland himself wholeheartedly subscribes:

Die Unschuld des goldnen Alters... wovon die Dichter aller Nationen so reizende Gemähde machen ist unstreitig eine schöne Sache; aber sie ist im Grund doch weder mehr noch weniger als die Unschuld der ersten Kindheit. Wer erinnert sich nicht mit Vergnügen an die schuldlosen Freuden seines kindischen Alters? Aber wer wollte darum ewig Kind seyn? Die Menschen sind nicht dazu gemacht Kinder zu bleiben. (B., II, 164)

It might be objected that this is not the true moral of the story and that Wieland is merely making use of the concept of childhood to dispose of the state of human development which Koxkox and Kikequetzal represent. If before their fall the two lovers enjoyed absolute happiness and absolute innocence, as the story seems to suggest, then their way of life represents the most ideal way of life imaginable, and any change from this condition must be regarded as degeneration. If such happiness is at all conceivable, then every other condition must seem to be one that is filled with unhappiness and guilt when compared with the original condition.

One possible answer to these objections is that to Wieland's mind such happiness is really not conceivable at all. Although he may often allow himself to indulge in dreams of a golden age, he is by no means convinced that there ever was a period of perfect primitive happiness. His descriptions of primitive peoples frequently give one the impression of conscious irony. Thus even Tlantlaquacapatli refers to the idyllic existence enjoyed by Koxkox and Kikequetzal as a "beautiful dream" (B., II, 123). Wieland is willing, on the other hand, to concede the existence of a period of primitive happiness, but only to point out, at the same time, that what was experienced in this period of mankind's development could not have been perfect happi-

ness, for the simple pleasures enjoyed by the primitive community are more than outweighed by the possibilities for happiness in the civilized state: "Die Musen würden seinen Geist nicht verschönern, die Grazien seine Freuden nicht veredeln, die Wissenschaften ihn nicht auf den Weg geleitet haben, sich die ganze Natur zu unterwerfen" (B., II, 227).

It might still be argued that Wieland's descriptions of the primitive state are, indeed, the result of inner conviction. In that case, it would have to be admitted that he conceived of his own ideal of civilized man as a degeneration from an earlier period of perfect innocence and joy. Such a concept entails an inconsistency on the part of Wieland which loses its significance, however, in the face of the principle implied in the comparison—which has been quoted above—of the state of nature with childhood. The point that Wieland is making in this comparison is that every epoch in the development of the human race, just as every age in the life of the individual, has its own justification for existence and therefore should not be condemned as inferior to some other period. Wieland's opposition to Rousseau thus leads him to ideas in which a certain historical element is noticeable.

But opposition to Rousseau was not necessarily the most important factor in developing Wieland's tendency to think in historical terms. One possible direct source for such ideas is Adam Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1766), which was familiar to Wieland at least by 1770 and which is also considered to have influenced Herder's historical thought.⁶ Like Ferguson, Wieland is aware that every individual historical period must be considered as a unity in itself and can be evaluated only by its own standards, that new values which are continually emerging in the course of the development of mankind cannot be measured against the values of older societies. Wieland may not always manage to carry these ideas to their logical conclusion and to refrain from comparing conditions in different epochs of human development, but the element of historicism in his writings is nevertheless sufficiently emphasized to forestall all attacks on his ideal of civilized man.

A supplementary aspect of Wieland's attitude toward the primitive state may be observed in the episode in *Der goldene Spiegel* of the "Children of Nature," whose lawgiver Psammis has made the following principle into a fundamental law of the community: "Die Natur hat alle eure Sinne, hat jedes Fäserchen des wundervollen Gewebes eures Wesens, hat euer Gehirn und euer Herz zu Werkzeugen des Vergnügens gemacht" (G., XVI, 102-103). The Children of Nature may be described as a nation of epicureans, who enjoy both freedom and equality. Their way of life is successful, however, partly because they practice moderation in their devotion to sensual pleasures and

⁶ There is one direct quote from Ferguson's essay in the *Beyträge* (I, 225). For a discussion of Ferguson's influence on Herder, see Roy Pascal, *The German Sturm und Drang* (Manchester, 1953), pp. 217-32.

partly because a good deal of their pleasure is derived from making others happy. The Children of Nature represent for Wieland a valuable personal ideal, but it is not his intention to set up their community as either a desirable or a possible political ideal. On the contrary, he ridicules those who dream of an original state of natural happiness and maintains, quite in the spirit of Ferguson, that the proper concern of man is to live in and for his own times:

man wird des Wünschens bald überdrüssig seyn; und—ohne zu hoffen, dass man unversehens einen schönen Muschelwagen mit sechs geflügelten Einhörnern vor seiner Thüre finden werde, um den Wüscher in die idealischen Welten überzuführen—wird man sich gefallen lassen, diejenigen Mittel zum glücklich leben anzuwenden, die in unserer Gewalt sind, und in die Verfassung der Welt eingreifen, worin wir uns befinden.⁷

Despite the element of historicism in his thought, Wieland is not able to free himself from the rationalist tendency to think in terms of moral decline. He continually returns to the idea that civilized man is always in danger of succumbing to moral corruption—unless, like Danischmend-Wieland, he has attained a high degree of spiritual and intellectual perfection. Since this will never be true for mankind as a whole, the state must attempt to minimize the harmful aspects of culture without eliminating its beneficial effects. Wieland's ideas concerning the achievement of this goal may be discerned in *Agathon* and, his major political writing, *Der goldene Spiegel*.

Agathon is essentially a philosophical novel. Its purpose is to demonstrate the development in the hero of a practical philosophy of life. According to Wieland, the supreme wish of man is happiness. But, since the richest sources of happiness are love and benevolence, man's capacity to enjoy life is greatest when he identifies his own interests with those of the common good. One of the chief aims of education, then, is training in the virtues of political life. *Agathon* thus becomes a political novel, and the education of Agathon himself includes initiation into the practical problems of society and its institutions.

The first of the three major episodes which contribute to the development of Agathon's political perception delineates his rise and fall as a popular leader in the Republic of Athens. The significance of this experience is twofold. In the first place, his failure inspires in him a violent antipathy to all forms of popular sovereignty. On leaving Athens, he is convinced that republican government, no matter what its specific constitution, will always result in tyranny. There can be little doubt that Wieland himself shares this derogatory attitude toward any form of popular sovereignty, for he emphasizes that Agathon's criticism is based on a profound and exact knowledge of the faults inherent in such states. Wieland is willing to concede,

⁷ *Der goldene Spiegel* (G., XVI, 129). Cf. Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Basel, 1789), p. 15: "whatever may have been the original state of our species it is of more importance to know the condition to which we ourselves should aspire, than that which our ancestors may be supposed to have left."

however, that in the case of extremely small states a republican constitution can sometimes be quite effective.

A more significant aspect of Agathon's experience in Athens is that it reveals his naïve idealism in matters of political and social reform. His program is based on an ideal of man as he should be according to metaphysical speculation and does not take into account the particular character of the Athenian people with their complicated social and political motives. At least in this period of his career, Agathon has no sense of historical perspective. He seems to believe in the existence of a social optimum which is valid for all peoples and all times.⁸ According to Wieland, this inability to think in historical terms is a weakness which is to be found all too frequently in those concerned with political and social reform, in idealists such as Algernon Sidney, Brutus, and, above all, Cato the Elder. In this respect, it is revealing to consider Agathon's experiences in Athens in the light of Wieland's estimate of what Cato had attempted in Rome—and Don Quixote in Spain:

und nun fragt sich, ob der grosse Kato, da er in dem äusserst verdorbenen, gesetzlosen, und einer neuen monarchischen Verfassung schlechterdings bedürftigen Rom die Rolle seines Urgrossvaters spielte, und durch eine moralisch unmögliche Wiederherstellung jener Sitten, die ehemals das alte Rom gross gemacht hatten, dem verzweifelt bösen Zustande des zu einer ungeheuern Grösse aufgeschwollenen Roms abhelfen wollte,—ob er da was weiseres und schicklicheres unternommen habe, als Don Quischott, da er unternahm, den in Verfall gerathenen Stand der irrenden Ritterschaft (einen Stand, der in den Zeiten der Kreuzzüge wohlthätig und gewisser Massen unentbehrlich gewesen war) in den Zeiten Philipps des Dritten wieder herzustellen?⁹

When Agathon takes up the role of political reformer at the court of Dionysius the Younger in Syracuse, he attempts to base his program of reform on political realities, and for a time he is successful. In the end, however, he fails once more, which indicates an extreme pessimism on the part of Wieland concerning the possibility of any lasting measure of benevolent and equitable government under an absolute regime. Reflecting on his failure, Agathon himself becomes bitterly despondent and seems to have lost all faith in mankind. Then he is transported by the author to the Republic of Tarentum, which, as Wieland points out in a chapter entitled "Apologie des griechischen Autors," is a utopian republic existing only in the realm of ideas:

Aber in diesem eilften Buch... scheint der Autor aus dieser unserer Welt... ein wenig in das Land der Ideen, der Wunder, der Begebenheiten, welche gerade

⁸ Cf. Georg Raederscheidt, *Entstehungsgeschichte, Analyse und Nachwirkungen von Wielands "Agathon"* (Köln, 1930), p. 45: "Agathon scheitert als Staatsmann zum Teil auch dadurch, dass er zu reformatorisch vorgeht. Er lässt den historisch bedingten Zuständen nicht die Zeit, sich den neuen Ideen anzupassen; er bietet zuviel. Auch das ist ein Zug der Aufklärung."

⁹ From the "Beilage" to the poem *Das Leben ein Traum* (1771)—G., VII, 226-27.

so ausfallen, wie man sie hätte wünschen können, und um alles auf einmal zu sagen in das Land der schönen Seelen, und der utopischen Republiken verirret zu seyn.¹⁰

Under the guidance of Archytas, the wise ruler of the Republic, Agathon regains his faith in human nature, his desire to serve once more his fellow men, and even his willingness to take on another task similar to the one he had attempted in Syracuse, but only in the case of extreme necessity. Despite this attempt to restore to Agathon his faith in mankind, it seems clear that Wieland does not believe it possible to create the ideal state except in what he calls the "Land of Ideas." A consideration of *Der goldene Spiegel* will offer a more definitive answer to this question.

Der goldene Spiegel demonstrates Wieland's general agreement with the belief held by the majority of Enlightenment political thinkers that the key to the kind of government which prevails under any particular regime is to be discovered in the character of the monarch himself.¹¹ During the reign of Azor, who is weak, as well as that of Isfandiar, who is despotic, corruption and exploitation prevail in Scheschian, while under Tifan, who is benevolent and wise, the state flourishes. When the theories of government which are developed in the novel are examined more closely, however, it becomes evident that Wieland's political theories are by no means identical with those of his predecessors. It is the constitution which Tifan gives to his state that is of significance in this connection, for the governments of the other monarchs in the novel are described only in a negative way. What happens to Scheschian under Azor and under Isfandiar merely demonstrates the disastrous results of a government which has no principles other than those derived from royal caprice. Into his description of Tifan's regime, however, Wieland incorporates positive suggestions for the improvement of government, some of which are entirely new in concept.

The little state in which Tifan is brought up by the sincere and honest Dschengis is regulated entirely according to natural laws. The inhabitants enjoy absolute equality. All matters affecting the general welfare are decided by a court made up of the elders of the individual households. These communistic measures are, of course, typical of

¹⁰ Agathon (Leipzig, 1773), IV, 41-42.

¹¹ One of Sengle's chief objections to *Der goldene Spiegel* is that it is "keine Kampfschrift" (p. 260). To be sure, it does not constitute a revolutionary attack on the institution of absolute monarchy; it would be extremely difficult to find a work written during the German Enlightenment which does. But, as Goethe pointed out in 1772, the year in which *Der goldene Spiegel* appeared, it does contain a vigorous attack on the abuses of absolutism: "Den dritten Teil ziehen wir den beiden ersten wegen der meisterhaften Pinselstriche vor, womit er den Despotismus geschildert hat. Selbst der sokratische Faun in Königsberg kann nicht mit dieser Wahrheit und bitteren Wärme gegen die Unterdrückung reden und sie hässlicher darstellen, als sie hier in des Eblis Gestalt erscheint" (Jubiläums-Ausgabe, XXXVI, 35).

many small utopian communities, including those described by Wieland elsewhere in his writings. The physical characteristics of Dschengis' ideal community are also typical of the utopias described by Wieland and others before him:

Es war ein fruchtbares aber unangebautes Thal von Gebürgen und Wildnissen eingeschlossen, und, wie er glaubte, von der Natur selbst zu einer Freystätte bestimmt für den Tugendhaften, der sein Glück in sich selbst findet. . . . In wenigen Jahren verwandelte sich der grösste Theil dieser angenehmen Wildniss in Kornfelder, Gärten und Auen, von tausend kleinen Bächen gewässert. . . . Die frohen Bewohner lebten im Überflusse des Nothwendigen. . . .¹²

Wieland does not intend this ideal community to have political significance in itself. He is too much an empiricist to believe that political equality is possible except, perhaps, in a very small political unit. It had been one of Agathon's major failings that he had ignored political realities and had attempted to force a theoretically ideal form of government on people who were neither socially nor morally mature enough to support it. Dschengis' state is created for the sole purpose of establishing an environment suitable for the education of a prince who would otherwise have grown up amid the moral corruption of an extremely dissolute court.

After he has learned in this ideal environment how society should be governed according to the true concepts of nature and the destiny of man, Tifan is taken on a trip through the world, where he sees men and governments as they really are. He learns that the sublime concepts of innocent men and golden ages with which he had grown up are nothing more than golden dreams (III, 189-90). He now realizes—as had Agathon before him—that laws must be made to deal with men not as they should be, but as they are, and that the legislator must take particular care to prevent the conflict of individual interests and the contagion of moral corruption, the twin evils of the civilized state.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the total effect of Tifan's program of legislation, which cannot be described in detail here, is to make Scheschian into a welfare state. The meticulous government control which he introduces is justified by the argument that the people lack the maturity to be trusted with any measure of social or political responsibility. This argument, which was introduced to Enlightenment political thought by Christian Wolff¹³ early in the century, is presented by Wieland in very similar terms:

Die Nation von Scheschian muss den König als ihren Vater und sich selbst in Beziehung auf den König als unmündig betrachten. . . . Welche Ungereimtheit, es auf die Weisheit oder das gute Glück dieser Unmündigen ankommen zu

¹² *Der goldene Spiegel* (Leipzig, 1772), III, 153-55; subsequent references to this edition will be found in the text.

¹³ *Vernünfftige Gedancken von dem gesellschaftlichen Leben der Menschen und insonderheit dem gemeinen Wesen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1747), pars. 264, 433.

lassen, was für Gesetzen, unter welchen Bedingungen, und wie lang es gehorchen wolle? Es geziemt also allein dem Könige, zugleich der Gesetzgeber und der Vollzieher der Gesetze zu seyn. (IV, 46-47)¹⁴

Although Wieland is a firm believer in absolute monarchy, he is by no means blind to the faults of this form of government. He knows that absolutism can easily become pure despotism, as is shown by the regimes of Azor and Isfandiar. It is the task of government to prevent corruption, but not to degrade the people to abject slavery. It is a question of finding a form of government which permits the king to do good, but does not leave him the power to do evil. In this respect, absolute power requires a limitation, and Wieland finds this limitation in the principle that the king shall not govern through the law, but the law through the king (IV, 56), that is to say, the king must restrict himself merely to interpreting the law of nature or, as Wieland himself puts it, to discovering the will of the supreme lawgiver (IV, 48). This is not a new idea, of course, but the way in which Wieland attempts to realize it is new.

In Wieland's ideal state, the constitution which prescribes the duties of the king is not simply a friendly warning to preserve the welfare of the people, but it is provided with *vis coactiva* in the fullest sense of the word. Before any ordinance of the crown can have the force of law, the leaders of the estates must test it for conformity with the constitution. If they discover a discrepancy, they must point it out to the ruler, together with the reasons for their disagreement. If the crown still insists on the validity of its decree, then the heads are required to convene the estates. Once a three-quarters majority of the estates have given their support to the leaders' objections, the law in question is considered to be invalid. Its publication can be prevented, if need be, by force. The competence to judge whether a particular law is in harmony with the constitution has thus been removed from the legislator, that is, from the king himself, and transferred to the estates.

From the standpoint of the German Enlightenment, that is a truly incredible measure, for it gives the estates the function of a supreme court with control over the legislative power. The practical impossibility of such a court in the absolute state is obvious. Wieland is

¹⁴ All prominent political thinkers of the German Enlightenment sanctioned the welfare state. Even Friedrich Carl von Moser, whom Sengle (p. 262) regards as a bolder reformer than Wieland, believed that the people were politically immature and that all aspects of their life had to be strictly regulated from above: "Die Obrigkeiten werden . . . darum mit dem Ehren-Nahmen der Väter des Volcks von uns respectirt, weil sie vor unsern minderjährigen Verstand und Einsichten denken, unsere Begriffe bilden, unsere Sitten ordnen und unsern Neigungen die gerechte Richtung geben sollen." *Beherrigungen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1759), p. 326. Cf. Hans M. Wolff, *Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung* (Bern, 1949), p. 9: "In praktischer Hinsicht war auch Wieland unbedingter Anhänger der absoluten Staatsform und, wie alle Denker der deutschen Aufklärung, schroffer Gegner jeder Mitwirkung des Volkes an der Regierung. Pufendorf blieb fast im ganzen 18. Jahrhundert der Weisheit letzter Schluss."

writing, however, not so much to endorse a particular program of political action as to stimulate thought. That he himself is aware of the impractical nature of such constitutional limitations is evident from the objections which he has Sultan Gebal make to these innovations (IV, 57).

The important thing about Wieland's proposals in this matter is not so much their specific content as their intent. The dignity of man as the bearer of humanistic ideals is not consistent with lawless oppression. Wieland is so conscious of this discrepancy that he suggests changes which would incorporate constitutional limitations into the absolute state. This concession to constitutionalism seems to be purely nominal, however. Wieland has, in fact, very little faith in constitutional guarantees as deterrents to oppression. Even the best constitutions, he maintains, will not be able to prevent a monarch from oppressing his people: "die weiseste Staatsverfassung kann dem Monarchen nicht verwehren, durch einen unruhigen Geist, oder durch Trägheit und Schwäche der Seele, oder irgend eine ausschweifende Leidenschaft seine Völker unglücklich zu machen" (IV, 196).

This general statement is borne out in the case of Scheschian itself. The constitution which Tifan gives to Scheschian does not prevent that ideal state from degenerating into tyranny after his death. This degeneration is not, as the above quotation might lead one to suspect, simply the result of a series of unsatisfactory rulers. The cause of the decline is a gradual moral corruption which spreads slowly but inevitably through the entire population. Wieland does not share the naïve belief of Enlightenment thinkers before him that, if the monarch is good, all will be well in the state. The decline of Scheschian is an implicit repudiation by Wieland of the belief which the Enlightenment shared with Rousseau in the power of man to bring about lasting improvement in society by education or by constitutional change.¹⁸

¹⁸ This is true both for the version of 1772 and that of 1794. Sengle's statements (p. 267) about the first version are misleading: "Während nämlich die Fassung letzter Hand (1794) auf die Regierungszeit Tifans den erneuten Verfall des Reiches folgen lässt und damit auch diesen Idealtherrscher *sub specie aeternitatis* betrachtet, fehlt dieser Schluss in den ersten Veröffentlichung. Hier gibt sich—zwischen dem 'Diogenes' und den 'Abderiten'!—der grosse Ironiker die Miene, als glaube er an den Anbruch des goldenen Zeitalters unter dem grossen Kaiser der Aufklärung." But Tifan is considered "*sub specie aeternitatis*" in the first version; for example: "Tifan liess es um so mehr dabey bewenden, weil er sich und seinen Nachfolgern das Vermögen auch willkürlich Gutes zu thun nicht entziehen wollte; eine Idee, welche sich mit der menschlichen Schwachheit vielleicht entschuldigen lässt, wiewohl sie durch ihre Folgen in spätern Zeiten dem Scheschianischen Reiche verderblich worden ist" (IV, 122). In addition, the decline of Scheschian is described in the first version and at some length—although not in a formal conclusion: "Die Priester von Scheschian waren nicht die einzigen im Staate, welche nach und nach ausarteten; und nimmermehr würden sie es dazu haben bringen können, die Tyrannen des Reichs und endlich seine Zerstörer zu werden, wenn die übrigen Classen ihrem Charakter und ihren Pflichten getreu geblieben wären. Indessen ist zur Ehre des Priesterstandes und der Gesetzgebung Tifans genug, dass sie... überhaupt, wenn man das Landvolk ausnimmt, die letzten waren, welche dem Hange zum Ver-

In the final analysis, then, the real cause of Scheschian's decline is the imperfectibility of man. Wieland evidently believes that the tendency to moral decline in man is so strong that it cannot be entirely eliminated by any human means. Once more we see Wieland on the border between rationalism and historicism. His concept of moral decline presupposes an absolute standard and therefore belongs to rationalist thought. But, by opposing to the rationalist striving for an ideal society the pessimistic thought that no state, not even the best possible, can last, he is again giving expression to an idea which has its roots in historical-relativistic thought.¹⁰

Although Wieland usually refrains from defining human goals, he does not, as later do Herder and the *Sturm und Drang*, actively combat the rational conceit of the Enlightenment. It is also true that Wieland does sometimes write as if he believed in the guiding of man by God to the peak of enlightenment. This tendency, however, is the result of a pragmatic element in Wieland's thought. In a passage toward the end of the *Beiträge*, for example, he expands considerably on the ideal future society toward which mankind is progressing. To this passage, however, he appends a question which suggests that he sets mankind such a goal because he fears the disastrous consequences that any alternative would have:

Schwärme ich? Es sollte mir leid seyn, wenn nur Einer von denen, welche vorzüglich dazu berufen sind, auf ein so edles Ziel zu arbeiten, denken könnte, dass der Einzige allgemeine Endzweck der Natur, der sich denken lässt, wenn überall ein Plan und eine Absicht in ihren Werken ist, eine Schimäre sey. Ist es eine Schimäre?—Nun, so wissen wir, was wir von dieser sublimarischen Welt zu denken haben. (B., II, 231)

Wieland's attitude toward the idea of perfectibility is even more manifest in *Agathon*, where Archytas outlines his concept of the divine plan, the fundamental principle of which is universal striving for perfection. The proof which Archytas offers for the existence of this plan is essentially pragmatic, for he stresses above all the practical benefits which have resulted from his own belief in it and which could result for mankind as a whole, if all men ever came to believe in it and to strive for its fulfillment.

Und ein System von Ideen, dessen Glaube diese Wirkung thut, sollte noch eines andern Beweises seiner Wahrheit bedürfen als seine blosse Darstellung? Ein Glaube, der . . . mich auf dem geradesten Wege zur grössten sittlichen Güte und zum reinsten Genuss meines Daseyns führt, die in diesem Erdenleben möglich sind; ein Glaube, der, so bald er allgemein würde, die Quellen aller sittlichen Übel verstopfen, und den schönen Dichtertraum vom goldenen Alter in seiner höchsten Vollkommenheit realisiren würde;—ein solcher Glaube beweiset sich selbst, Agathon! (G., XI, 379)

Wieland is not nearly so shallowly optimistic with regard to the derbiss nachgaben, der sich unter den Nachfolgern Tifans allmählich des Hofes, der Hauptstadt, und endlich der ganzen Nation bemächtigte" (IV, 189-90). See also IV, 179-80, 186-88.

¹⁰ See Hans M. Wolff, *Aufklärung*, p. 238.

future of mankind as a first examination of the above quotation might lead one to suspect. A little later on in his discussion with Agathon, Archytas presents us with the paradox—which because of the pragmatic element in Wieland's thought is only apparent—that man must strive for perfection, for the very reason that it can never be achieved. Or as Archytas puts it, man has a duty to believe in the divine plan and to work for its fulfillment, particularly because "wir nicht zweifeln dürfen, dass die undurchbrechbaren Schranken unsrer Natur, auch bei der höchsten Anstrengung unsrer Kraft, uns immer unendlich weit unter der wirklichen Vollkommenheit dieses Plans und seiner Ausführung zurück bleiben lassen" (G., XI, 382).

As we have seen, one of Wieland's major concerns was the problem of how to construct a form of government which would not degenerate into tyranny and how to establish a society governed by laws which would effectively check man's inherent tendency to moral decline. Whereas Herder and the *Sturm und Drang* insist that all men in all historical periods must have richness of experience and the greatest possible development of human capacities, Wieland still maintains—for pragmatic reasons—that equitable social institutions should be considered the sublime purpose of history. Admittedly, Wieland's approach to historicism is not always consistent. It signifies, nevertheless, the end of the period of Enlightenment political thought. Wieland's implicit denial of the perfectibility of man and, through him, of society points clearly to Herder and the *Sturm und Drang*, a period which expresses a new human situation and new political values and in which men no longer indulged in dreams of a future golden age.

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SARTRE'S *NO EXIT* AND BRECHT'S *THE GOOD WOMAN OF SETZUAN*: A COMPARISON

By ERNST LOEB

Sartre's all-important conclusion that "you are your life, and nothing else" (p. 45)¹ appears to be weakened by the fact that it is in itself projected from "after-life." Although not conventional "Hell," it is the remoteness of a bird's-eye view of life as if seen from another planet, a regretful afterthought rather than a directive, its application in "actual" life unintentionally relegated to a realm of improbability. Man, torn from his daily entanglements in guilt, deceit, and self-betrayal, suddenly plunged into timelessness and left to his own hopelessly impoverished resources, finds himself exposed to the kind of "Hell" he has been carefully trying to avoid all his life: the "Hell" of ultimate and painful self-discernment beyond the crumbling walls of artfully constructed rationalizations.

And since Sartre is careful to point out that we are dealing with a "theatre of situation" rather than the former type of "theatre of 'characters,'" the heroes are mere "freedoms caught in a trap, like all of us." This strongly resembles the Marxian approach, with one significant difference: that "In a sense, each situation is a trap—there are walls everywhere... there are no issues to choose. An issue is invented. And each one, by inventing his own issue, invents himself. Man must be invented each day."² After God as a directing power has been regretfully but determinedly removed, Sartre also seems unwilling to sacrifice man's newly found and ennobling freedom of choice to the even more imperfect devices of determinism.

Of more immediate concern than "issues" is the situation in which man finds himself. Each of the three characters in *No Exit* is portrayed in a personal agony of growing self-awareness, constantly placing obstacles in the way of painful revelation, shielding himself behind the conventional lies of society, and clinging to every last shred of a spurious and rapidly vanishing "respectability." "Thus," explains Sartre, "existentialism's first move is to make every man aware of what he is and to make the full responsibility of his existence rest on him."³

A situation more conducive to the desired character development (if the procedure of self-detection by gradual removal of layer after layer of illusions and delusions may be termed a "development")

¹ Quotations from Sartre's *No Exit* are based on Stuart Gilbert's translation (New York, 1957); numbers in parentheses refer to page numbers in this edition.

² Jean-Paul Sartre, *What Is Literature?* trans. from the French by Bernard Frechtman (New York, 1947), p. 293.

³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism*, trans. from the French by Bernard Frechtman (New York, 1947), p. 19.

could hardly be imagined: a door, usually locked and even quite useless when opened; no awareness of the change of day and night, with emphasis on a growing experience of timelessness; no mirrors diverting attention by their deceitful appeal to a lying world of appearances; a hideous bronze contraption on the mantelpiece, a "night-marish atrocity," shapeless and immovable, an ever-present reminder of vain ambitions, as useless as the paper-knife in this world without books and letters; and even the faded elegance of a Second-Empire drawing-room, reminding of one of the most shallow and unreal periods in French history.

And here they are, coward Garcin and baby killer Estelle, her jilted lover Inez bent on a repeat-performance of the same unnatural relationship which had once before—in her "earthly" existence—brought unhappiness and death to three people, including herself. Nor is there any change in the others: Garcin has no regrets for the inhuman treatment of a faithful wife, just as Estelle tries to find speedy consolation for the loss of the rather single-minded pleasures of her previous existence. Quite naturally they will go on believing "what people really want to think"—that a "born" coward will be a coward all his life, just as a "born" hero will be a hero all his life:

That's what we're like, no one can do anything about it... What the existentialist says is that the coward makes himself cowardly, that the hero makes himself heroic. There's always a possibility for the coward not to be cowardly any more and for the hero to stop being heroic. What counts is total involvement; some one particular action or set of circumstances is not total involvement.⁴

But whatever direction this "involvement" might take, we are reminded of the futility—if not immorality—of regret as well as any belated justification of our deeds in the light of later developments:

Perhaps a day will come when a happy age, looking back at the past, will see in this suffering and shame one of the paths which led to peace. But we were not on the side of history already made. We were... *situated* in such a way that every lived minute seemed to us like something irreducible. Therefore, in spite of ourselves, we came to this conclusion, which will seem shocking to lofty souls: Evil cannot be redeemed.⁵

What remains, then, is man's conscious thrust toward "existence" by "inventing" his own undirected choice where there is no light to guide him; becoming his choice and by this creative act establishing his new and only real authenticity—hopefully also for the common good, but only hopefully so. The inescapable hell of "other people" (i.e., the awareness of an ever-present society) seems particularly unmanageable at this juncture of Sartre's scheme, marking an irrational turn in the direction of pious expectations.

Before maturing to the realization that "Hell is—other people" (p. 47), Garcin shudders at the thought of having to live with the hell of

⁴ Sartre, *Existentialism*, pp. 40-42.

⁵ Sartre, *What Is Literature?* p. 219.

his own distorted self, to have to endure his own company. "To live without eyelids" (p. 6) seems unbearable, in spite of his oft repeated readiness to "face" the situation. Sartre leaves no doubt, however, that solitary confinement, dulling our senses and creating self-righteous delusions of self-pity, would be a rather insufficient "instrument of torture" compared to the oppressive presence of "other people." To have to depend on "others" (who are equally concerned with building their own image!), and with no mirrors to flatter our vanity (except in the eye of the "other"), is, after all, the inescapable reality of things: forever with us and forever posing the unending task of man's existential decision. This, then, is the trap of our perennial "situation"—the need of an existential decision which will have to be our very own, while at the same time placed in an inescapable setting of human interdependence: forever and ever. "No exit"—indeed.

Because "you are your life, and nothing else," all three of our characters "die" as they gradually suffer the fate of "earthly" oblivion. Loveless and harsh Inez dies first, followed by superficial and cheerfully unconscionable Estelle, while tenacious slander bestows its dubious gift of longevity on Garcin, vainly and desperately seeking forgetfulness in Estelle's easily accessible love. But pulling down the veil of soothing forgetfulness would lead into the exact opposite of the demanded direction. Nor is there any room for love: "Knowing too much" about one another, we have destroyed its very foundation of half-truths and pleasant illusions without, on the other hand, having been able to find a new foundation of mutual trust. "Enlightened self-interest" remains as the only motivation left to man, a "windowless" entity in a far more absolute sense than Leibniz' monads—even cut off from the built-in directive and consoling certainty of a pre-established harmony. Man, ceasing to be a satellite—and with all outside guidance removed—has the function of radiating rather than receiving light.

In spite of an unalleviated "no exit" situation, there are tangible results of existentialism's "first move" on the arduous road to self-awareness. When the door finally does open, we find none of the three willing to sacrifice their costly gain: not Inez, who really "belongs" since all of her is "here, in this room" (p. 30); not Estelle, although "just a hollow dummy" with all that's left of her outside (p. 35)—yet somehow "never so much alive" (p. 12)—dimly sensing herself on the way to what little authenticity she may be able to acquire; not Garcin, who dreads nothing so much as a second flight from himself, finally "facing the situation" and determined, as he says, to "get on with it" (p. 47).

To get on with what? Although the individual problems of Garcin, Inez, and Estelle may be well on the road to their seeming solution, little has happened to convince us that "all" is well—or even as well as can be expected. Precisely what may we expect?

As Sartre tells us, "in creating the man that we want to be, there

is not a single one of our acts which does not at the same time create an image of man as we think he ought to be . . . and nothing can be good for us without being good for all."⁶ It remains a mystery why the image of man "as we think he ought to be" should inspire any degree of confidence.

The existentialist . . . thinks it very distressing that God does not exist, because all possibility of finding values in a heaven of ideas disappears along with Him; there can no longer be an *a priori* Good, since there is no infinite and perfect consciousness to think it. Nowhere is it written that the Good exists, that we must be honest, that we must not lie; because the fact is we are on a plane where there are only men.⁷

"Very distressing"—indeed. How could man, with a record of failure even under the sheltered conditions of religious guidance (or reassured, as the case may be, by the secular consolations of determinism), be expected to live up to new and infinitely more demanding responsibilities? "Actually," as Iris Murdoch says in this connection, "there is no transition from Sartre's individual, perpetually wrapped up in himself, and a 'common good' . . . His view . . . that if I will freedom for myself I necessarily will it in the same sense for others goes even beyond Kant."⁸

There is no "human nature" to rely on, "since there is no God to conceive it."⁹ And since guidance can be derived neither from the "lessons of history" nor from the rewarding expectations of determinism, Sartre remains "an uneasy utilitarian, hovering on the verge of an irresponsible pragmatism, which has its affinities with the romantic nineteenth-century cult of 'experience,'"¹⁰—and certainly at variance with the experience of our own age.

The play of the *Good Woman of Setzuan* is a "parable," pointing—by definition—to a didactic intent diametrically opposed to Sartre's purpose. Brecht uses the individual case of one Chinese girl to prove a point of general validity, i.e., to demonstrate a basic weakness in the setup of our world: the impossibility to be "good" and live decently at the same time.

Sartre, to begin with, is not concerned with the problem of "goodness" as such, other than postulating it as a not altogether logical by-product of any "real" existential commitment. While he persists in dissolving a general situation into a series of—arbitrary—individual choices, their validity determined by depth of commitment rather than by "moral" considerations, we find Brecht, after showing us a series of inefficient—and consequently "wrong"—choices, leading up to the one inescapable "choice" whose validity is determined by effective-

⁶ Sartre, *Existentialism*, p. 20.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

⁸ Iris Murdoch, *Sartre, Romantic Rationalist* (New Haven, 1953), p. 68.

⁹ Sartre, *Existentialism*, p. 18.

¹⁰ Murdoch, p. 69. In substituting a "universal human condition" for a discarded "human nature," Sartre does little to lessen the arbitrariness of his conclusions. (Note also the related—and yet very different—consequences drawn by Marxism from practically identical premises.) Cf. Sartre, *Existentialism*, p. 45.

ness. Nor do contrast and similarity end here. It is in the importance of the given "situation" as well as the role of the "engaged" writer in his relationship to it that we can detect a rather marked similarity of approach. "The 'engaged' writer," Sartre tells us, "knows that words are action. He knows that to reveal is to change and that one can reveal only by planning to change. He has given up the impossible dream of giving an impartial picture of Society and the human condition."¹¹ A sentiment quite similar to this was expressed by Brecht: "One thing, however, has become clear: to men of today the present world can only be described, if it is described as a changeable world."¹²

Nor does Sartre's condemnation of "pure" and "empty" art seem too far removed from Brecht's "culinary" label for so-called bourgeois aestheticism. Both would claim with equal fervor that "pure art and empty art are the same thing and that aesthetic purism was a brilliant maneuver of the bourgeois of the last century who preferred to see themselves denounced as philistines rather than as exploiters."¹³ Brecht's rich barber Shu Fu might smash a poor water seller's hand while at the same time moved to lofty sentiments by Shen Te's angelic goodness. He would hardly resent being called a "philistine," but he would certainly be stung into righteous indignation by the epithet "exploiter."

There is disagreement here, however, as to the limits and possible effectiveness of the writer's "engagement": Brecht's rather far-reaching intent to change the "world" (although in reality equated with the more modest concept of present society) may be contrasted to Sartre's appeal "merely" to change human attitudes—precisely because there is no chance to understand, let alone change, the "world." Proclaiming it the task of his new "epic" form of theater to "awaken rather than consume" the activity of the audience, "forcing decisions from the onlooker,"¹⁴ Brecht postulates the "right kind" of understanding, culminating in action to bring about a change of conditions, which in turn will create the kind of world where Shen Te can be good and still pay her rent. "Goodness" being the kind of luxury one can ill afford in our kind of world now becomes a distinct possibility. But does it become a "must"—just as wickedness has been an obvious "must" in the world of yesterday? Will it be more than the kind of moral embellishment which people might choose to do without, no matter where and how they live? And would not the expectation to elevate it—by mere force of innate quality—to the guiding principle of the "new" world presuppose a belief in human nature, postulating, in effect, a much more powerful God? "Given a chance," we are told in so many words, "man will be good." But why?

¹¹ Sartre, *What Is Literature?* p. 23.

¹² Bertolt Brecht, *Schriften zum Theater* (Berlin u. Frankfurt a.M., 1957), p. 8. (Trans. E.L.)

¹³ Sartre, *What Is Literature?* p. 27.

¹⁴ Brecht, p. 19.

The fact that we find a question rather than an "obvious" answer at the end of Brecht's parable turns out to be an artistic device of great ingenuity. It is this seeming omission of a conclusion which gives the play "the dynamic force of a fragment. The intensity with which it causes the onlooker to come to terms with the problems posed is even stronger than would be the case with a well-rounded drama. Thus it evokes his dissatisfaction . . . urges him on to solve the seemingly insoluble." Volker Klotz goes on to compare the fragment in this respect to the syntactic figure of an ellipsis, calling in similar fashion on the reader or listener not only to supplement the missing part but, in doing so, to proceed in an implied direction. There is no longer a question of free choice—the seemingly "conclusionless" end "fits effectively the purpose of the didactic form of the parable."¹⁸

Such is Brecht's intention. The answer—provided that his question is really "understood"—seems inescapably implied. But the indecision, planned as a mere tactical device, is becoming strangely genuine. Too many questions have been raised—unanswered and unanswerable questions—and the artist, simply by giving expression to them in obedience to his conscience, has once again outgrown the theoretician:

In your opinion, then, what's to be done?
Change human nature or—the world? Well: which?
Believe in bigger, better gods or—none?
How can we mortals be both good and rich?¹⁹
(p. 106)

Of course, Brecht "knows" his answers and hopes to have them placed convincingly on our doorsteps. It is precisely to the extent that he does not succeed that he shows his real artistry.

In keeping with the character of the parable, there is but one central theme. Three gods, undecided among themselves as to the scope of their investigation and on various stages of readiness to compromise, are desperately looking for "a good man." Their long and futile search also leads them to Setzuan. A repeat-performance of a string of previous disappointments is prevented when the water seller Wang, "almost" a good man (save for the two bottoms of his measuring cup), succeeds in persuading the prostitute Shen Te to give them lodging for the night. Generously compensated, she is now in a position to acquire a tobacco store, ready to embark on her venture to be good, now that she can afford it. But with all the destitutes of her acquaintance suddenly descending upon her like vultures, she can save her noble experiment only by assuming a double identity,

¹⁸ Volker Klotz, *Bertolt Brecht: Versuch über das Werk* (Darmstadt, 1957), p. 22. (Trans. E.L.)

¹⁹ Quotations from Brecht's *Good Woman of Setzuan* are according to the English version by E. Bentley and M. Apelman, B. Brecht, *Parables for the Theater* (Grove Press, New York); numbers in parentheses refer to page numbers in this edition.

masquerading, in ever shorter intervals, as her own "cousin" Shui Ta. It is only by this split-personality device of an alter ego—by no means cruel or wicked, but just "realistically" clever and farsighted enough to set things straight—that "goodness" manages to survive.

While Shen Te's marriage to the unloved but wealthy barber Shu Fu would help to settle things, her love for the penniless, unscrupulous, and undeserving ex-flier Yang Sun introduces complications too much even for Shui Ta to handle. The tobacco factory, founded on the barber's money, finds itself in growing difficulties; Shui Ta, his usefulness as a helpful cousin visibly impaired by a seven months' pregnancy, is hauled off to court, while the poor of the neighborhood are clamoring for the return of "good Shen Te." The whole scheme is uncovered. The gods, reappearing as judges and refusing to face the fact that goodness could survive only by rather frequently resorting to more dubious means, finally stage a fitting disappearance on pink clouds, vanishing into their realm of nothingness—with the all-important question obviously still unanswered. But does not Brecht's own "Shen Te"—promise of a world of future goodness depend on the daily presence of a rather brutalized "Shui Ta"? And is not the "pink cloud" of selective blindness Brecht's own device of "facing" the ugly facts of this reality?

Brecht's exquisite woodcarving technique of presenting people in the fullness of their being at each given moment combines the advantage of lucidity and plastic portrayal with certain dangers of oversimplification. Although creating a naturalistic setting and characters certainly conditioned by circumstances, he manages to avoid the pitfalls of cliché by giving us not so much "life," but rather its select aspects, emphasizing a heightened demand on character revelation: people have to "prove" themselves in their inner reality, rather than show their drab and uninteresting everyday appearance. Of course, they will not be permitted to jump over their own shadows: the poor will have to be wicked to survive, the rich cunning and unfeeling to preserve their prey—with only Shen Te standing on a plane by herself, her "goodness" only slightly tinged by her "professional" inability to say "No."

Brecht has made clear that he considers his songs a conscious departure from the flow of events, rather than a lyrical continuation of action.¹⁷ "Speaking through" and interrupting the course of dramatic events somewhat in the tradition of Romantic irony, the poet thus creates a "chorus" as the mouthpiece of his own convictions. It is, in August W. Schlegel's words, "the idealized onlooker," formulating "in lyrical, i.e. musical form" the expected reactions of the "real" onlooker and guiding them in the desired direction—for Brecht a sphere

¹⁷ Brecht emphasizes the "Funktionswechsel" of the singing actor: "Nichts ist abscheulicher, als wenn der Schauspieler sich den Anschein gibt, als merke er nicht, dass er eben den Boden der nüchternen Rede verlassen hat und bereits singe." Brecht, *Schriften*, p. 32.

of political action considerably beyond Schlegel's "region of contemplation."¹⁸

On the other hand, there are obvious weaknesses of oversimplification. Shen Te, with her understanding of "goodness" as an ever-readiness to give all of herself unreservedly and at all times, stands in the tradition of noble prostitutes from Zola to Sartre. The cult of the victimized prostitute in literature corresponds to that of the—preferably "class-conscious"—proletarian in the political sphere: he might err, but he can do no wrong. (In the present parable, we are, incidentally, dealing not with proletarians, but rather with a kind of "Lumpenproletariat," composed partly of a de-classed bourgeois element, such as former artisans and shopkeepers, not capable even of minimum solidarity, with perhaps the water seller Wang as the only exception.)

We find this type of "goodness" incapable of saying "No" under any circumstances, contrasted with a type of gods that are expected to say "Yes" under all circumstances. In a complete reversal of the old Euripidean deities, these gods serve the one and only purpose of proving by their mere appearance the futility and emptiness of all "divine" machinations and their complete uselessness in a world of modern realities. But while the Biblical God, in a quite similar undertaking, was willing to spare the city of Sodom for the sake of one single good person, Brecht's gods are neither incorruptible in their evaluation of human decency, nor do they have the power of punishment or, for that matter, any power. The search for the real *deus ex machina*, however—after the failure of Shu Fu's checkbook as well as Shen Te's split-personality device—is left in tongue-in-cheek fashion to the audience.

There is more than a hint of a "no exit"—situation also in Brecht's play. Quite literally so, for instance, in the song of the niece:

The old, I hear, have nothing left to hope for.
Since only time can heal, they're in a fix.
But for the young, I hear, the door is open.
It opens, so they tell me, upon nix. . .

(p. 19)

It is an "open door" which is just as much of an illusion for the pilot without a plane as for the water seller in the rain.

But in contrast to Sartre, Brecht deals with a changeable world, although "another world" (Klotz reminds us) "to him is a new social order. The one which has been presented, the one existing to this day, has to be changed. This unuttered answer has to be accepted by the audience as the potential *deus ex machina*."¹⁹

While Sartre aims to preserve the freedom of "choice," as a means of finding personal meaning in life rather than pointing to impossible

¹⁸ August Wilhelm v. Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur*, 3. Vorlesung (Leipzig, 1923), I, 55. (Trans. E. L.)

¹⁹ Klotz, p. 23.

solutions in a basically "exit-less" situation, Brecht confronts us with the Danaë gift of a seemingly solvable situation, but at the expense of freedom of choice. This, then, seems to be the quintessence of the two plays: there is either no exit or no choice.

It seems, however, that the alternative either "to be good" or to live a life worth living proves much more obstinate than anticipated. Even if we are to assume that a change of the social order will result in certain all-round improvements, it seems quite obvious that this problem will remain with us just as certain as it always has been. "The Good," it appears, can neither be thought of as a practically self-evident afterthought of a series of existential decisions, nor will a change of any given order lead to its "inevitable" triumph. Its very essence is our understanding of ourselves as part of humanity, rather than of any given society, an understanding forever up to the individual and too much dependent on daily realization ever to be "self-evident." Just as there would be little merit in accepting the inevitable, "Goodness," to qualify as such, has to be its own reward.

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THE ALLEGORY OF THE NAMES IN *L'ETRANGER*

By GERALD KAMBER

Upon taking up *L'Etranger*, the reader is confronted with a title he is likely to understand as "The Foreigner," but which is subject to a number of other interpretations as well. For instance, deep into the first section of the novel, this title might rather come to mean "The Misfit," and at the end, it could have acquired the sense of "The Alien," retaining all the while a strong flavor of the Latin root meaning "strange." All of the foregoing and also the Biblical "stranger" are present for this word in modern French.

In fact, if we depart from the root *extraneum*, something out of normal usage, we first find the idea of foreign nationality (the overwhelmingly frequent one), then that of nonrelationship of categories, lack of germane connection and continuity between elements, then lack of relevancy, a sense of not belonging, plus all nonliteral extensions of these, and finally the current though pleonastic "stranger" as a synonym for *inconnu*, probably an Anglicism.

Thus the title has placed us on the periphery of a complicated lexicographical problem, given the richness not only of its successive denotations, but also of its cumulative connotations. The problem, moreover, is never entirely resolved through subsequent familiarity with the text; but as we read on, its meaning gradually deepens, ultimately designating an individual endowed with total lucidity and who, thereby, finds himself "The Outlander" in a chaotic universe. This fairly equals the sum of all the previous parts.

Since a separation of aims and function may often be observed between the critical discipline and the linguistic one, the critic tends to understand any given epithet and to accept it within a common cultural framework without enumerating its specific linguistic properties. Were the title then the unique example of suggestive ambiguity among the names, it could be accepted with no further speculation, the ambiguity being dismissed as an interesting coincidence. But of twenty or so personages in the novel, only ten are given names and each of these names also is open to equivocal interpretations.

Carl A. Viggiani, in his recent article, speaks of "Camus' constant name-punning and allegorizing," and adds, "it becomes clear that in the names that Camus uses one can often find meanings that clarify the whole of a particular work."¹ Another commentator, Herbert S. Gershman, has stated: "It is strange that the names mentioned in the text *do* [his italics] lend themselves to an allegorical interpretation."²

¹ Carl A. Viggiani, "Camus' *L'Etranger*," *PMLA*, LXXI (1956), 873.

² Herbert S. Gershman, "On *L'Etranger*," *FR*, XXIX (1956), 304.

If this is true, so complex an allegorical system deserves careful analysis both for the multiple semantic values contained in it and for the light it throws on the central meaning of the novel.

The *patron*, never referred to in any other way, is the first of the impersonal upholders of authority to be encountered in a book where such personages constitute a large and constantly oppressive body. Very much the father-figure suggested by the Latin root plus the augmentative suffix, he is initially presented as disgruntled at Meursault's taking two days off for his mother's funeral. This interest-directed attitude, though inadmissible on the human plane, incurs no risk of public censure. Later, it will be revealed as the socially approved counterpart to Meursault's disinterested attitude; but Meursault's attitude will appall his judges and hasten his condemnation, since it is prompted by apathy, a sentiment unacceptable to the society.

And yet the *patron* is capable of a certain detached benevolence. He offers Meursault an opportunity to set up an office in Paris, saying: "Vous êtes jeune, et il me semble que c'est une vie qui doit vous plaire" (p. 63).³ One is struck by the categorical impersonality of the premise that a young man will necessarily like Paris; and the verb *doit* virtually constitutes the conclusion of an unstated logical syllogism. At last, exasperated by Meursault's continued indifference and refusal to participate, the *patron* upbraids him for his lack of ambition and intimates darkly that this is disastrous in business, probably the most ominous consequence he can imagine.

J'ai pris l'autobus à deux heures. Il faisait très chaud. J'ai mangé au restaurant, chez Céleste, comme d'habitude. Ils avaient tous beaucoup de peine pour moi et Céleste m'a dit: "On n'a qu'une mère." Quand je suis parti, ils m'ont accompagné à la porte. (p. 10)

Here is a singularly offhanded way of presenting a character patently labeled, Céleste. First, a time-dated statement of the completed action informs us that Meursault had already taken the bus; then, the meteorological commonplace; then, another compound past out of time sequence where one would have expected a pluperfect (especially in a work where the pluperfect abounds), announcing that, previous to having taken the bus, Meursault had eaten in a restaurant, plus the qualifying "at Céleste's," followed by the decrescendo of "as usual." Camus carefully refrains from giving any indication of Céleste's nature or even from telling us whether he is a man or a woman (Céleste is perhaps more commonly a feminine name), except to say that Céleste is part of a solicitous group and that Céleste utters that popular banality.

Further on, Meursault recounts: "Il était toujours là, avec son gros ventre, son tablier et ses moustaches blanches. Il m'a demandé si 'ça allait quand même'" (p. 42). Not only do these few words inform us that Céleste is not a woman; they suffice to conjure up the

³ All page references will correspond to the Gallimard edition of 1957.

paunchy, middle-aged, mustachioed Latin, practically the epitome of European mature maleness. This stereotypical creature—who might have stepped out of the Marseilles of Pagnol—is portrayed partly by description, partly by quotation and paraphrase, the "si 'ça allait quand même'" (what Céleste probably said was: "Ça va quand même?") being a companion cliché to "On n'a qu'une mère." All of this would seem to bear out Viggiani's assertion that "there is nothing very heavenly about Céleste" (p. 872).

But at the trial, this simple man, dressed in the new suit he wears only to the races (although unable to button on his detachable collar), affirms that Meursault is a friend as well as a client, that he is also a man, and that everybody knows what that means. He parries the allegation that Meursault is "renfermé," explaining that he never talks when he has nothing to say; and he flatly refuses to discuss their financial dealings, dismissing them as mere details between friends. When asked his opinion of the murder, Céleste can only manage to answer that it is a "malheur."

Céleste represents basic human qualities as they are before the intervention of societal values. Dealing in these vast and fundamental issues, he fails to comprehend the need for a definition of words like *man* and *friend*. And the word *malheur* perfectly expresses what the *Méridional* understands to be an act of senseless violence with a tragic aftermath. At the end, impotent to sway a manifestly hostile courtroom, he turns with shining eyes and trembling lips, and the undemonstrative Meursault thinks: "c'est la première fois de ma vie que j'ai eu envie d'embrasser un homme" (p. 132).

Céleste is not conspicuously heavenly in the supernatural sense, nor would society attribute to this humble man divine stature. Yet in Camus' severe universe, stripped as it is of all but the barest essentials of life, the very motive force and thereby the highest good to which man can attain is that unconditional love generated by Céleste. This is part of a long humanistic tradition that probably begins with Sisyphus and includes Don Juan and Abou Ben Adhem, all of whom occupy the loftiest place in a system scaled exclusively to human values.

After lunch, Meursault feels a bit giddy because, as he says, he has to borrow a black tie and armband left over from the death of Emmanuel's uncle (p. 10). That is all the information we get. There is absolutely no delineation of the personality, although, for instance, we know from the start that Céleste is "populo" and good-natured. There is only the echo of the word *giddy* applied by Meursault to himself, and then the nonsequential explanation announced by the ostentatious but misleading "because." When Emmanuel reappears, in the remarkable passage where the men overtake and jump onto a moving truck, it is in the guise of coworker in the shipping office.

In Hebrew, the word *Emmanuel* means "God is with us," an epithet applied to Christ Himself by the Church Fathers because Christ was

not only one *with* God, He was *One* with God. In view of Camus' admitted preoccupation with "l'homme absurde," who is none other than "l'homme-dieu,"⁴ and Viggiani's question, "is it not Christ . . . who is hidden behind the developing hero of Camus' fictions?" (p. 887), as well as Gershman's ingenious if brief attribution of allegorical significance to the dramatis personae of the book (he later abjures this hypothesis; see page 303), one might readily suppose that Emmanuel is *one* with the mythic figure of the sacrificial victim, Meursault, and acts as his blank-faced alter ego.

If, on the other hand, we further admit the rather gross pun made by the protagonist's name, i.e., *meurt*—die, and *saut*—jump, associated respectively with grief and joy, then Emmanuel spans that arc of human experience suggested by the name. First, he lends mourning to Meursault, a grief the presumably bereaved son cannot muster by himself; then, he collaborates on the Sisyphus-like routine that consumes more than one-third of the absurd hero's waking hours, toil so unchallenging that even Emmanuel is capable of accomplishing it, though "Emmanuel . . . ne comprend pas toujours ce qui se passe sur l'écran" (p. 53); third, he invites Meursault to forget himself in a mad dash for a moving truck; he too participates in this glorious pursuit; and when they have leaped into the truck, he experiences pure joy and laughs until he is out of breath. Is it not plausible that the faceless and mindless Emmanuel, living out or at least symbolizing the affective aspects of Meursault's existence (as revealed in the components of his name) and substantially interchangeable with him, is somehow one with the absurd man-god?

At the Home, Meursault's urgent ("tout de suite") desire to see his dead mother is promptly countered by the order of the *concierge*, shifting him upward to a yet higher authority, the *directeur*. The *directeur* is, of course, busy, obliging Meursault to wait; during this time the *concierge* does all the talking. We begin to see how, upon contact with these titular figures, administrative amenities are deferred to in preference to personal wishes, and Meursault finds himself suddenly plunged into the labyrinthine world of officialdom.

In the spare but pointed description that follows, "Camus nous fait le portrait d'un fonctionnaire assez satisfait de son autorité," as Armand Renaud has noted in his stylistic study.⁵ The effect of this encounter, as with the *patron*, is to reduce Meursault to the role of timorous simpleton, bleating "Oui, monsieur le Directeur" and stammering awkward and unnecessary explanations of why he had placed his mother in an old folks home. The *directeur*, in the very words of the *patron*, says at the end: "Vous êtes jeune. . ."

It is here that we first learn the hero's name, but indirectly prefixed as if matriarchally, when the *directeur* tells Meursault: "Mme Meur-

⁴ Albert Camus, *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* (Paris, 1942), pp. 93, 146.

⁵ Armand Renaud, "Quelques remarques sur le style de *L'Étranger*," *FR*, XXX (1957), 292.

sault est entrée ici . . ." (p. 11). If the names clarify the work, Vigiani amends that this is not true of the name of the hero.

Because of the suggestivity of the name, it has excited the interest and curiosity of more than one reader. However, in discussing this study with me, M. Camus said that he found the name at dinner one evening when a bottle of Meursault wine was served. He added that, despite the suggestivity of the name, he did not consciously associate it with any particular idea or feeling. (p. 873)

Gershman has also cautiously admitted: "It would be tempting . . . to say that Meursault's name, without violating its phonetic pattern, can be spelled *meurt-sot* or *meuri-saut*. . . . It would be equally tempting to go from here. . . ." This Gershman does, giving us allegorical meanings for most of the names. But, he adds, "Meursault is also a place name . . . hence, it is probably not a very uncommon name" (p. 303); and he then proceeds to destroy his hypothesis.

Now it is impossible to impute to Camus reasons which he says he did not have. Nevertheless, one inescapably thinks of the written components, "death" and "jump," and of the phonemic elements, "die" and "fool," and eventually one is surely reminded of their literal sense and of the welter of associations they provoke. It is also strange that we never hear Meursault's given name, the better perhaps to emphasize its vocative quality and at the same time to keep him within the penumbra of a mythic half-anonymity. That Camus has fortuitously chosen a name from a wine bottle is obvious, but that he should have chosen this particular one from among many, that it should contain such direct and disturbing implications, and that it should resemble the name of his first fictional hero, *Mersaut*, these constitute a responsibility to his readers. He can disclaim the meanings; he cannot prevent their suggestive associations from haunting us.

The elderly people at the Home are not usually permitted to attend the funerals of the other inmates. The *directeur* explains: "C'est une question d'humanité" (p. 23); but he goes on to mention a "cas spécial," seemingly in contrast to humanity. This special case, announced in a second direct statement, is Thomas Pérez. He and Mme Meursault had grown so close that the others would banteringly tell Pérez, "C'est votre fiancée"; and now it seems fitting to allow him to go. We forget Pérez for a couple of pages, but then suddenly he is thrown into sharp focus by a scathing description (p. 25).

Vigiani has commented:

the mother, the absent or dead father who appears in a variety of disguises, and the son constitute the matrix of Camus' fictional world. The other characters in his books and plays . . . tend to be subsumed by the central figures of the mother and father. In this light, Thomas Pérez . . . becomes more than a common Franco-Spanish name. If one disregards the *s* of the surname, it becomes the French word for "father," which on one level is precisely the role played by the character. (p. 873)

We have seen how Camus announces the appearance of the principal actors: "aujourd'hui" summons "maman" as Madame summons

Meursault. At times he takes elaborate pains to introduce them in an inconspicuous way, as with Céleste and Emmanuel. There certainly is a reason for calling Pérez to our attention in that stentorian manner, then dropping him completely, then picking him up two pages later to etch him in scorching vividness by that merciless caricature (the only character in the book so representationally drawn). What emerges is a dual figure: on the one hand, nonhuman, clownlike; on the other, the mother's fiancé, husband-lover-father even as the name indicates. Moreover, the hideous old man, so cruelly caricatured and yet so apparently harmless, rises up at the trial to damn Meursault, thus serving as negative pivot between an actively forbidding force and a merely indifferent one.

Marie is a two-level name-pun, as Viggiani has pointed out, combining the sounds of the first syllable of "maman" and of "mère," and merging mother and wife into a sort of Madonna image. Cardona, too, is interesting. It is common in North Africa for names to have an Italianate or Hispanic cast, so that one forgets the French equivalents, i.e., Salamano "sale main." Cardona, then, or a hypothetical masculine equivalent, would be "chardon," and the laughing Marie is just that, a constant stimulus and irritant.

When she meets Meursault for a Saturday date, "On devinait ses seins durs et le brun du soleil lui faisait un visage de fleur" (p. 53); in the water, "Elle a mis sa bouche contre la mienne. Sa langue rafraîchissait mes lèvres..." (p. 54); and again, "J'ai senti ses jambes autour des miennes et je l'ai désirée" (p. 77). Another graphic phrase, "elle a eu vers moi un mouvement de tout le corps pour me tendre sa bouche" (p. 66), gives some idea of her lithe sensuality.

So much for her ability to excite purely physical titillation. She attempts to nettle Meursault into a stable relationship, a more conventional mode of living. We think of the juxtaposition of the *patron's* offer and of Marie's proposal of marriage which follows on the next page. She spurs him on when he is too tired to get up: "il a fallu que Marie m'appelle et me secoue" (p. 71); and "Marie m'a secoué" (p. 77). She, by her fundamental prurience, also goads Meursault to an awakening of his emotive consciousness, as when he notices how appealing she looks in a pair of his pajamas with the sleeves rolled up: "quand elle a ri j'ai eu encore envie d'elle" (p. 55).

This is emphatically not a simple physical response; Meursault begins to notice her as a person, and he has the appropriate emotional reactions, a rare enough phenomenon for him. Or again, when he tells us, "elle a encore ri de telle façon que je l'ai embrassée" (p. 55); and the lyric passage when he realizes how lovely she looks in a white summer dress and with her hair loose: "Je lui ai dit qu'elle était belle, elle a ri de plaisir" (p. 71).

Viggiani reports Camus as saying:

Salamano was more than just a name to him, and it is, of course, not an inappropriate name for a character whose dog is covered with brown scabs and spots,

who resembles his dog, and who has "[des] mains croûteuses" (p. 61). The idea of "dirty hands" that the Italianate name evokes reinforces the feeling of disgust produced by both man and dog. (p. 873)

Viggiani is correct in calling it Italianate and not Italian, for "sala" neither means nor suggests dirty in Italian; it is a pun for French readers. It is first encountered on page 42, where we are treated to a detailed description of the personage that continues for two more pages. It is repeated on page 52 and on pages 59, 60, and 61, where Salamano informs them that the dog is lost, and again on pages 67, 68, 69, and 70.

Camus spends nearly thirty pages on Salamano, allowing us to savor his name, his appalling skin condition and that of the dog, the dog's dripping urine, the man's hatred and the dog's terror, the interminable questions and lamentations, the pathetic autobiography, all building up to the moment when "d'un geste furtif, il m'a tendu la main et j'ai senti les écailles de sa peau" (p. 70).

The name Salamano is obviously a literal reference to a skin condition, but there remains a deeper meaning. If we compare him to the other named characters, we see that none of them actually advocates by word and example such a wholesale adherence to the social order. Salamano wanted to go into the theater, but he does not regret having gone to work on the railroad instead, because now, as he says, he receives a small pension! In other words, turning from a career composed almost purely of romance, fantasy, and illusion, Salamano chose a life of soot, heavy machinery, and timetables. And a modest benefice enables him to eke out the last years of a joyless existence.

He married late, was unhappy with his wife, and yet grew so used to her that when she died, he replaced her with a dog. But he does not care for the dog either, and it becomes disgusting to him. Ultimately, as a kind of poetic irony, he and the dog have come to resemble each other and to render each other's existence odious. The dog's disappearance shatters the entire pattern of that existence. Salamano, in his infinite malleability, has been twisted around to the point of siding with his own tormentors. In order to complete his negative being, he needs a dog he does not like, as he needed a wife he did not like, as he needed a life he did not like.

How Camus must have disliked the scabby old man to parade him before us, bowing and scraping, obsequious and endlessly garrulous, until with that master stroke, he really makes us touch him. Salamano always moves in a thoughtless, mechanistic way, remaining helplessly to take the consequences. As an individual, he has been ineradicably soiled by attachment to and engagement (one might venture to call it engulfment) in societal situations. He surrenders his individuality with seeming eagerness and undergoes the ensuing dehumanization symbolized by confusion of love and hatred towards the dog. In existentialist terms, he represents the "en soi." No wonder that Meursault thinks of his mother when he hears Salamano grieving for his

dog; she too is a situational personage toward whom he is constrained to exhibit the proper external responses.

Raymond Sintès, a disagreeable ruffian, belongs partially to Meursault's private world and partially to a severely circumscribed underworld, though he really aspires to be accepted as a respectable citizen. He appears absurd, however, to the people of the neighborhood, and later to those at the trial, because of his vulgar bravado, his foolish violence, and the ludicrous insistence on the profession of "magasinier," though he is actually a pimp. He comports himself in an equally absurd manner toward Meursault by his pathetic offers of friendship, his projects of petty vengeance, and his exaggerated gallantry toward Marie.

Nor is he genuinely antisocial in the sense that social may be opposed to individual. Unlike Salamano, who has all too readily adapted himself to the social order, Sintès cannot accept the world's way (the world to which Meursault is so indifferent). He is the true and tragic misfit yearning after the security of belonging, conforming, and subordinating himself to an external order, yet eternally unsuccessful in doing so. Having rejected the morality of the everyday world, he substitutes for it the narrower and more rigid code of the underworld, though in the end, this too proves a deception.

Sintès, then, functions as a synthesis of disparate elements: the social organization which has rejected him, but which he is impotent to dissociate himself from; the restrictive milieu of the *durs* whose sordid law and discipline he submits to and with whom he identifies himself; and finally, Meursault's tiny world of lost souls which attracts him as last human refuge. He somehow incorporates all these within himself and, managing to hold them in a precarious balance, effectuates the *synthèse* that his name implies.

Into what pattern do these eight named characters dispose themselves, and how do the names correspond to the distribution? The arrangement is one of a spiral circulating outward in seeming obedience to lines of centrifugal force. At the center turns Meursault, the very incarnation of brute egocentrism. Closest to him, and like a moon revolving around its planet, floats Emmanuel, without individual presence and reflecting Meursault's light. Then, moving farther out, is Céleste, giver of nourishment and custodian of human love. Next, Marie Cardona⁶ (one step removed from the first-name nucleus, though never referred to as anything but Marie) draws Meursault toward the redemption of a woman's love. In fifth place, Raymond Sintès⁷ (again always cited by his first name), least individualistic

⁶ M. Camus was gracious enough to inform me that Cardona, "c'est le nom de ma grand'mère maternelle," while "Sintès est le nom de jeune fille de ma mère." This personal documentation, interesting in itself, has no bearing, however, on the problem at hand, i.e., correspondences between the semantic components suggested by the actors' names and the roles played in the novel by these actors.

⁷ See above, n. 6.

and most collectively oriented of the five, occupies the outermost orbit of Meursault's system and, conversely, the innermost orbit of that of society.

Beyond him other characters revolve in a series of concentric circles: Thomas Pérez (known variously by both names, as M. Pérez, or simply as Pérez), pathetically reduced father-figure and by that token still technically connected to Meursault; Masson ("massif d'épaules," a last name only), environmental product and raw material—perhaps also the "masses"—which eventually decompose into these social wrecks; and eighth, Salamano, spokesman and propagandist for society. There is also the briefly glimpsed undertaker, Figeac (possibly *figé*, i.e., something fixed and unchanging as the death that provides the only escape). More victimized than victimizing, however, these threadbare souls blend into a welter of French and Arabs, undertakers and nurses, priests and old people—in short, the population of the state. But above and beyond, remote and never named except by their fearsome titles, shine forth a galaxy of *fonctionnaires*, *patrons*, *juges*, and the like, overseeing the operations of society.

Camus has used the flash word of the multiple significations, *étranger*, to describe the singular state of his protagonist, though he calls him Meursault as if bidding him escape. Furthermore, the title must be understood against the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and especially in the terrible tribal sense of the Old Testament so clearly demonstrated by the reactions that Meursault does not provide and that make of him a stranger. A passage in point would be that of Matthew xxv.41-46, where the Son of God, seated on his throne of glory, says to those on his left:

Retirez-vous de moi, maudits, allez dans le feu éternel, préparez pour le diable et pour ses anges. Car... j'étais étranger et vous ne m'avez pas recueilli... malade et en prison, et vous ne m'avez pas visité... tant que vous ne l'avez pas fait à l'un de ces plus petits, vous ne l'avez pas fait à moi, non plus.⁸

Now we can see the bitter frame of the title and the way in which it focuses on justice and injustice, salvation and punishment, the treatment meted out to one who is a stranger to the tribe. It also becomes clear that godliness is equated here, not with might or prestige, but with humility, suffering, and charity.

M. Camus himself, upon reading this study, wrote to me:

Dès l'instant où un auteur choisit d'illustrer dans un roman un certain symbole, bien des faits, des noms, des tournures, même les plus fugitives des images, viennent irrésistiblement s'ordonner autour de ce symbole et en reçoivent comme un reflet. Melville, par exemple, n'a pas voulu toutes les correspondances symboliques qu'on peut trouver dans Moby Dick et cependant elles sont indéniables, comme est indéniable sa volonté de créer une sorte de mythe. [And he concludes]...vous pouvez en effet défendre le point de vue que, comme pour Meursault, les noms propres m'ont influencé inconsciemment.⁹

⁸ I am indebted to Alfred Engstrom of the University of North Carolina for calling this passage to my attention as well as for several helpful suggestions.

⁹ See above, n. 6.

We should not underestimate Camus' scorn for conventional behavior; he never ceases to mock its pretensions and castigate its most estimable proponents. One remembers the dryly sardonic exposition of the Oranais way of life in *La Peste*, the crackling description (from the same book) of Judge Othon's children in the restaurant, gotten up "comme des chiens savants" (p. 25), or the "petit homme distingué" in *L'Etranger* (p. 35). Young men shout that they have won a soccer match, others streaming home from the movies "avaient des gestes plus décidés d'habitude et j'ai pensé qu'ils avaient vu un film d'aventures" (p. 37). Man is endlessly manipulated by his environment; he eventually comes to believe in it, perpetuate it, and find compensation in it. Meursault, however, is not convinced and declines to participate.

This is the drama, old as Socrates, of an individual who refuses to conform and who, as a result, runs afoul of the social order. The circular structure into which the characters dispose themselves would appear to symbolize that outward sweep away from the individual in his basic consciousness toward society in its collective authority. The names then function as allegorical referents, indicating the relative position of the character in this spiral—and often Camus' judgment of the situational ethic involved.

Since the fundamental phenomenon of human life has assumed total importance for Meursault, living as he does in a perpetual present of immediate and absolute subjective reactions, he must not violate natural law which serves society as a mediate and arbitrary criterion. When he does, this violation furnishes a pretext to destroy him, and he cannot quarrel with this judgment. On the contrary, he comes to know "La divine disponibilité du condamné à mort . . . cet incroyable désintéressement à l'égard de tout, sauf de la flamme pure de la vie. . . ."¹⁰

Whatever reasons Camus may have had for not wishing to acknowledge the allegorical content of the names, he was too fine a poet to be unaware of their suggestivity, too conscious a literary artist to ignore the implications of their literal meanings. As we read on, they constantly come back upon our lips and confirm, by their ambiguities, things at which the text only hints.

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¹⁰ Camus, *Sisyphus*, p. 83.

RHYTHMIC LANGUAGE IN THE THEATER

By LAURENCE W. COR

Several contemporary French critics and theorists maintain that the dialogue of a play should be endowed with a certain rhythmic quality. In fact, they consider the ability to write rhythmic dialogue to be one of the essential gifts of the playwright. As Jean-Louis Barrault states it:

Ce qui est beau c'est la réalisation humaine d'un orchestre de chambre, laissant ainsi s'épanouir grâce, instinct, passion et en dessous: lucidité; devenir; Musique. Or notre art devient justement enivrant dès qu'il est pris par le rythme et qu'il tend vers la musique.¹

If a play is written in verse, it is self-evident that the language the actors speak will possess the element of rhythm. The adoption of a metrical form compels the arrangement of words according to a pre-determined rhythmic pattern. If the dramatist writes his dialogue in prose, he is not, of course, bound by a definite meter as is the poet. This does not mean, however, that rhythm is automatically excluded from the text.

The question then arises: in precisely what way can language in the theater attain to rhythm, short of relying on the means and devices at the disposal of the poet. The answer lies in the ability of the prose dramatist to respond to the rhythms that exist in those arts that relate directly to the human body and to the human voice. Such rhythms in the dialogue are possible because eventually the words spoken by the actor will be related to his gestures and movements and, by extension, to the visual arts such as ballet or even to rhythmic exercises such as gymnastics. The words themselves, since they must be spoken, will demand attention to the speed or slowness of delivery, or, to express it another way, to tempo as it exists in music. In sum, the language of a play may attain certain rhythms because it is intimately associated with the dynamics of performance.

In the ability to relate the rhythm of words to the actor's gesture and movement, no one was more successful than Molière. To illustrate this process, Henri Ghéon analyzes a passage from the first scene of *Le Médecin malgré lui*. It consists of two alternating *répliques*, each commanding a gesture and fixing a character. The tempo of the movement is varied—now fast, now slow. At first the sentences are of equal length, and correspond to each other like lines of verse: a long with a long, a short with a short. Then comes the alternation of long and short:

¹ *Réflexions sur le théâtre* (Paris, 1949), p. 182.

MARTINE
J'ai quatre pauvres petits enfants sur les bras.
SGANARELLE

Mets-les à terre.

MARTINE
Qui me demandent à toute heure du pain.
SGANARELLE

Donne leur le fouet.

Finally, there is a series of *répliques* that are shorter and consequently more rapid. It might be said that they correspond in movement to a *presto*. After the whacks with a stick by Sganarelle, and a long series of abusive terms by Martine, the scene comes to an end with a declaration of telling effect that implies perfect harmony:

MARTINE
Ivrogne que tu es!
SGANARELLE
Je vous battraï.
MARTINE
Sac à vin!
SGANARELLE
Je vous rosserai.
MARTINE
Infâme!
SGANARELLE
Je vous étrillerai.
MARTINE
Traître! insolent! trompeur! lâche! coquin!
pendard! gueux! bélître! fripon! maraud! voleur!
SGANARELLE, *levant le bâton*
Ah! vous en voulez donc! (*Le bâton frappe.*)
MARTINE
Ah! ah! ah! ah!...
SGANARELLE
Voici le vrai moyen de vous apaiser.²

According to Ghéon, this is the type of prose that should be written for the theater, if the dialogue is to be other than a series of invertebrate conversations. It is a direct, active, and stylized prose that creates, follows, and joins a visible action, receiving and, at the same time, giving it impetus. The dialogue of a play may not have on every occasion this same rhythmic energy, but even in a slow movement it will obey the same principles and have the same variety of effects. In Ghéon's view, this scene supplies an eloquent example of what the constructive thought of the dramatist should be. It not only arranges and orders feelings and ideas, but unites the word to the gesture and the gesture to the word.

Ghéon maintains that such prose gains the entire attention of the audience. The connection and the progression of the words compels audition. The *répliques* impress themselves with more force on the mind than the amorphous conversation of real life is wont to do.

² *L'Art du théâtre*, Éditions Serge (Montréal, 1944), pp. 87-89.

Likewise, the relation and the movement of the gestures compels the attention of our eyes. Ghéon states that the general movement that carries us on toward the denouement is as bracing as a dance. As a matter of fact, almost all the comedies of Molière, even those without *divertissements*, are conceived as ballets, in both the plastic and the dynamic sense (pp. 87-91): "[Les comédies] semblent faites pour être dansées sur la musique du texte, une sorte d'improvisation libre et réglée où le mot et le bond naîtraient ensemble de concert" (p. 91).

Ramon Fernandez, in considering *Le Dépit Amoureux*, also calls attention to the rhythmic quality of Molière's prose:

L'évolution sentimentale y est mise en scène, de telle façon que les sentiments sont soutenus par des jeux de scène qui retiennent et rythment l'attention du spectateur; par exemple, le mouvement des premières répliques, où les acceptations brèves de Lucille font rebondir les tirades d'Éraste, et le jeu de l'échange des cadeaux, en sorte que les entrecroisements amoureux sont réglés comme des pas de danse.³

And consider what Fernandez writes concerning the *répliques* in *L'Ecole des Maris*:

Molière tire un usage merveilleux des répliques: répliques inégales, temps forts et temps faibles, qui s'appellent les unes les autres, répliques variées par l'accent avec une précision musicale dans la nuance: ripostes savamment "placées" afin de leur donner toute leur portée, soit par la pression des répliques précédentes, soit par des jeux de scènes d'entrée marqués par des "temps" de gymnastique. Les mots ne sont plus des mots, mais des forces soumises à des lois mécaniques. Les scènes ne sont plus écrites, ni même jouées, mais lancées dans l'espace et livrées à leur déroulement inflexible comme les va-et-vient du trapèze volant. (p. 110)

After reading such appreciations of Molière's particular gift, we are inclined to wonder why the rhythm in his prose is so closely associated with that of the dance or gymnastics. The explanation offered by Fernandez lies in Molière's familiarity with the *commedia dell'arte*. Reading the scenario of this theatrical form, like reading the script of a motion picture, cannot to any degree replace the viewing of the spectacle. The play is composed right on the stage according to spatial circumstances and according to the abilities and talents of the actors in the troupe. Of special significance is the guiding principle of the *commedia dell'arte*: theatrical ideas should be expressed in rhythm, one idea developing from another, as a dance step arises from a preceding one. Molière learned how to write a language that reflected the movements of the body and the changing positions of the actors in the space of the stage. Fernandez states that the extraordinary force of Molière's *répliques* derives less from their eloquence than from a kind of muscular release. And he continues: "Le génie de Molière a consisté à faire coïncider l'effet moral avec l'effet physique, la danse avec la démonstration" (p. 38). It is said that Scaramouche spoke little, expressing himself perfectly by mimicry and body attitudes. Fernandez concludes that the Italian actors

³ *La Vie de Molière*, dixième édition (Paris, 1929), pp. 57-58.

offered Molière a simplified model that he developed into a "littérature de grimaces et d'attitudes" (pp. 36-38).

If we accept the principles expressed by Ghéon and Fernandez, the example of Molière shows, then, that it is possible for dialogue to pulsate with rhythmic energy, even though it is not subject to the literary rules of prosody. The rhythm of visual movements can impose patterns that are reflected in the text. But a play is not only seen; it is also heard. The fact that language in the theater is spoken relates it to the physical function of respiration; and here lies another source of rhythm for the dialogue.

Pierre-Aimé Touchard holds that the rhythm of the dialogue must agree with the rhythm of the emotions felt by the spectator. How is the dramatist to observe this principle? It is relatively easy if he writes in poetry; writing in prose, he must make use of variations in rhythm that are much more subtle.

We breathe slowly or rapidly according to the general nature of the emotion. There are some emotions, for example, that make us hold our breath. Once the circumstances that cause the fear or anxiety are removed, we breathe more freely. The rate of our breathing in respect to the emotions resembles the situation in music. In this art, joyous emotion is expressed in rapid rhythm—an *allegro*. A more serious or painful emotion takes on the slow rhythm of the *andante*. In the theater, also, various emotions may be expressed by the slowing down or acceleration of the respiration.

To illustrate the use of fast and slow rhythms as they might appear in prose, Touchard takes two examples from *La Guerre de Troie* of Giraudoux.⁴ The first passage occurs at the beginning of the play where Hector is discussing with Paris the kidnapping of Helen:

HECTOR.—A cheval? Et laissant sous ses fenêtres cet amas de crottin qui est la trace des séducteurs?

PARIS.— C'est une enquête?

HECTOR.— C'est une conquête. Tâche pour une fois de répondre avec précision. Tu n'as pas insulté la maison conjugale ni la terre grecque?... Tu n'as pas couvert la plinthe du palais d'inscriptions ou de dessins offensants, comme tu en es coutumier? Tu n'as pas lâché le premier sur les échos ce mot qu'ils doivent tous redire en ce moment au mari trompé? (p. 180)

The short sentences that make up this questioning are light in tone. The syllables snap with precision and clarity. There are no weighted notes or anything in the way of musical prolongation. This corresponds to an *allegro*.

Consider now another scene, this one between Hector and Ulysses:

ULYSSE.— Je crois que cela sera plutôt une pesée. Nous avons vraiment l'air d'être chacun sur le plateau d'une balance. Le poids parlera...

HECTOR.— Mon poids? Ce que je pèse, Ulysse? Je pèse un homme jeune, une femme jeune, un enfant à naître. Je pèse la joie de vivre, la confiance de vivre, l'élan vers ce qui est juste et naturel. (p. 181)

⁴ *L'Amateur de théâtre*, Éditions du Seuil (Paris, 1952), pp. 178-82.

On the surface, the sentences in this passage are short. However, each important word has a tonic syllable followed by a mute syllable. This gives the impression of a heavy text:

Ce que je pèSE, UlysSE? Je pèSE un homME jeuNE, uNE femME jeuNE, un enfant à naîTRE. Je pèSE la joiE de viVRE, la confianCE de viVRE, l'élan vers ce qui est jusTE et naturel. (p. 181)

The weight imposed on the tonic syllable is prolonged because of the mute *e* of the one that follows. The notes are thereby emphasized and the rhythm of the sentence is slowed down. This is an *andante*. Although the passage is not in verse, it still shows that musical processes need not be foreign to language in the theater. The rhythm is not too apparent; it is inherent in the spoken words, and the actor must reveal it.

It is a convention in the modern theater that its language be prose, just as it was a convention in the theater of Shakespeare and Racine that the language be poetry. Encased in the realistic tradition, the modern playwright usually tries to make his dialogue seem true to life; that is, the writing for the most part consists of words that are plain, casual, matter-of-fact. To intensify his language, he does not have at his disposal the unconfined diction, the rhyming sequences, and the metrical resources of the poet.

Yet the examples cited by Ghéon, Fernandez, and Touchard imply that it is possible for the dramatist in prose to impose form on what purports to be natural gesture and speech, to endow it with a measured movement. What is significant is that the playwright, though not resorting to prosodic rules, may still utilize visual and musical rhythms that are organic to the very nature and conditions of the theater. As a result, it is possible for his language, which on the surface may be ordinary and banal, to be in reality highly transposed and stylized. Taking advantage of the rhythmic potential in orally delivered language, he can still create between his work and the audience a psychic distance, lifting the spectators from the sphere of life-imitation into the realm of art.

University of Idaho

REVIEWS

Thoreau's Translation of "The Seven against Thebes" (1843). Edited by LEO MAX KAISER. Hartford, Conn.: The Emerson Society, 1960. Pp. 30.

Leo M. Kaiser of Loyola University (Chicago) seems anxious to defend the author of *Walden* against the charge of being a dull translator. In a note in the *Classical Weekly* of January 5, 1953, he pointed out a few unliteral renderings in Thoreau's version of Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* and suggested that they might help to form "a more complete picture" of his translating skill than is given in Ethel Seybold's study, *Thoreau: The Quest and the Classics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951).

Thoreau's version of *The Seven against Thebes*, completed in 1843 but hitherto unpublished, may represent him even less worthily than the rendering of *Prometheus Bound*, which he presumably revised before it appeared in *The Dial* in 1842. He himself referred to this second venture as "a very rude translation." Yet, although Kaiser wrote in 1953 that the version of *Prometheus* "today has significance pretty much as a philological curiosity only," he now declares that the translation of *The Seven* "allows the reader a better appreciation of the craggy style of Aeschylus than many a polished version."

Cragginess is unquestionably present in the work. But is it Aeschylean, or plain rough going? In recent years, George Thomson and Richmond Lattimore have shown that Aeschylus can be turned into readable English verse with little damage to his crags. But Thoreau's version is strewn with boulders like this: "And kindred plunder of those running hither and thither, / He carrying fights with him carrying, / And the empty calls to him empty, / Wishing to have a companion / Nor left with less nor equal" (351-55). The rescue of this awkward exercise from deserved oblivion appears to be a clear case of publication for publication's sake.

The editing is conscientious. Kaiser notes Thoreau's alternate readings and corrections and makes a few additions of his own. He is less successful in establishing which Greek text was used. The introduction asserts that the "distinctive Greek text-readings . . . do not show acquaintance with the textual conjectures of modern scholars like . . . Dindorf," whose edition of Aeschylus appeared in 1827. But a note to line 50 states: "Thoreau's Greek text here accepted Dindorf's emendation." The editor believes that Thoreau used a text of the eighteenth century or earlier. Perhaps at line 50 it was prophetic.

FRANK W. JONES

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Essays, Letters, and Reviews by Matthew Arnold. Collected and edited by FRASER NEIMAN. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960. Pp. xv + 398. 000.

The modern reader is likely to think of Arnold—in so far as he was a writer of prose—as the author of books. His contemporaries, who had seen nearly everything of his appear first in the magazines, tended to regard him somewhat otherwise: one reviewer complained of the *Essays in Criticism* that "when a

journalist is sufficiently well known and successful to venture on collecting his sibylline leaves into one book, we might expect to see more pains taken to give them proper weight and finish for standard literature." There was a third Arnold who was unfamiliar even to most of his contemporaries—the contributor of anonymous and pseudonymous articles to the daily and weekly press, and even occasionally to the quarterly reviews. Many of these were not even known as Arnold's until a few years ago, when Fraser Neiman showed how the itemized income in Arnold's private account books pointed to his authorship of certain articles that became, with that clue, easily recognizable; Neiman thus added somewhat more than a dozen items to the Arnold canon.

In addition to these articles, to which he has well earned a discoverer's claim, Neiman includes in his volume similar ephemera (anonymous and signed) that have been known as Arnold's but have never been brought forth from their original hiding places. Among these are some that Arnold might have collected had he lived; others, newspaper reports of lectures, he himself never published. Then, less explicably, Neiman gives us still other articles that have been published in such popular series as Oxford Standard Authors, Everyman's Library, the Reynard Library, and Rinehart Editions, sometimes even in two or three of these. All the Arnold essays he has printed, except the two Latin ceremonial addresses, will take their place in the edition of Arnold's complete prose works that began to appear almost simultaneously with Neiman's book.

The publication of his new discoveries will give readers a chance to evaluate for themselves his claims for their authenticity; on the whole, they stand up well. But this reviewer will not soon believe that Arnold ever wrote a sentence like the following: "We had never until now got so much as within sight of a possibility of practice for ideas of complete and comprehensive reorganization; and what we now want is that views of such reform should be collected, or, in other words, a public opinion promulgated, among reformers face to face with the responsibilities of practice to give solidity to their speculations." The essay of which this is too typical a sample, "University Reform," surely is not Arnold's. On the other hand, had Neiman pursued further his clues in the account books, he might have added still other items to the canon: from the *London Review*, "The Code out of Danger" (May 10, 1862, pp. 429-30), a review of Willis' translation of Spinoza's *Tractatus* (December 27, 1862, pp. 565-67), and "Mr. Walter and Schoolmasters' Certificates" (April 11, 1863, pp. 374-75); from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "German and English Universities" (May 5, 1868, p. 11) and "A Recantation and Apology" (August 2, 1869, p. 3; signed).

As an editor, Fraser Neiman has been spared many textual problems, since in most cases only a single text exists. He has not always caught the obvious printers' errors in those texts, so that Arnold is still made to say that the Athenians "prescribed the excess of ornament, the extravagance of luxury" (p. 8), when he must have said just the opposite, and "numbers sufficient from heavy loss" (middle of p. 38) is unintelligible; but these are trifling matters. Neiman has just cause for quarrel with his own proofreaders for a considerable number of misprinted dates and figures, including the dates of publication of two of the Arnold essays (pp. 114, 237). Each article is preceded by a headnote that indicates the circumstances of composition and is followed by explanatory footnotes to make the ephemera intelligible. The patience and scholarly curiosity with which Neiman has pursued his search into the latter must command high respect.

R. H. SUPER

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A Troubled Eden: Nature and Society in the Works of George Meredith. By NORMAN KELVIN. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961. Pp. ix + 250. \$5.50.

It is difficult not to admire the industry with which Norman Kelvin pursues his theme that Meredith's views of nature and society became the basis for the form of his novels and poems. At the same time, it is impossible to accept his thesis when he refuses to consider *Diana of the Crossways* and emphasizes admittedly second-rate poetry in order to justify his conclusions.

From the outset his method is questionable. His reading of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* begins with a rejection of the critical appraisal that sees villainy in Sir Austin's system, but concludes by acknowledging that the "moral meaning of [the novel] is that human life is something other than the action of a complicated system of springs." In the same way, his statement that the presence of Vernon Whitford, in *The Egoist*, "never creates the atmosphere of brilliance, dash, and activity that Sir Willoughby's does" makes an absurdity of Meredith's characterization. Moreover, his dependence upon biographical criticism in analyzing this novel, apart from making unreasonable demands on Meredith, is irrelevant.

When Kelvin turns to Meredith's poetry, he does little to allay suspicions. One wonders at the purpose of an examination that admits "There is no necessary correspondence between the level of any given theme and the relative merit of the poems expressing it. Superior poems or poetic passages represent lesser themes while not a single outstanding poem is devoted to the highest theme of all." If there is any question that Kelvin is digging into a morass of inferior work, his repeated assertions of "poetic failure," "unfortunately didactic," and "unfortunately bad" dispel all doubts.

Much of what is wrong with Kelvin's book results from its origins as a thesis. Because he would like to give the appearance that it is something more than a doctoral topic, he includes sundry references to existentialism and insists on strait-jacketing his author with twentieth-century psychological dogma. But the thesis atmosphere remains in the dust of repetition.

Yet for all that, there is much to learn about Meredith from Kelvin's study. He successfully gives the lie to the myth (most recently repeated in Jack Lindsay's biography) that Meredith "was a lifelong, uncomplicated, nineteenth-century Liberal and Radical." He conscientiously discloses the middle-class conservatism that underlay the novelist's attitude toward common sense. If Meredith seemed involved in the Italian struggle for independence, his interest was mainly in endowing it with his own motives. "His political and social ideas varied from decade to decade." In his response to imperialism, he was no less chauvinistic than Tennyson. Unlike his liberal contemporaries, he rejected the idea of progress, and at no time was "particularly interested in republicanism."

To be sure, Kelvin ascribes the dualism in Meredith's thought to the author's deliberate desire for ambiguity as the artist's way of getting at the truth. Nevertheless, when Kelvin himself responds to the paradox by noting that "it would be folly to try to resolve the contradiction," there is the suspicion that Meredith's indecisiveness was less a virtue than a fault. Since Kelvin argues that "it is as an artist-moralist that [Meredith] made his claim for survival," perhaps it is the same failure in philosophical consistency which Kelvin chooses to see as the pattern in Meredith's work that accounts most for the decline in his reputation.

ROBERT D. SPECTOR

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e.e. cummings: The Art of His Poetry. By NORMAN FRIEDMAN. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1960. Pp. 195. \$4.00.

This book is devoted largely to an explication of the content of E. E. Cummings' poetry, and so far as it merely specifies that content, it is accurate and acute. The first chapter, "Vision," is the heart of the book, and succeeding chapters develop the general ideas stated there. The fifth chapter examines in detail the manuscript revisions of a single poem; the sixth concerns Cummings' development; and a postscript examines his latest volume, *95 Poems*.

The first chapter is a masterly statement of Cummings' beliefs; but the philosophical and critical attempt to defend his content and style is naïve: thus this and the remaining chapters are a shrewd analysis, but innocent defense, of intellectual idiocy. The idiocy is entirely Cummings', in whose world "there is evil, but no sin" (p. 13), a world in which one seeks "Transcendence [which] means freedom from limitations and has its source in a sinless universe" (p. 16), in which "mind infects man with the disease of asking and dissatisfaction" (p. 20), and in which, "If Mind is the dehumanized Satan . . . Love is its humanized Christ" (p. 22). The final end of man is thus summarized:

[Cummings'] reaction to suffering and evil is, since they are wholly manmade, hate unalloyed with pity; he has no sense at all of man's helplessness due to historical or metaphysical causes. And his reaction to courage and love is, since they are wholly divine, admiration unspoiled by second thoughts; he has no idea whatever of man's fundamental ambivalences due to environmental and psychological causes. He who is truly alive is truly self-reliant and self-created; he is beyond the reach of external causation; his life is entirely within; and he has reached that state of beatitude described by John Donne as characteristic of the soul after resurrection: ". . . she reads without spelling, and knows without thinking, and concludes without arguing; she is at the end of the race without running; in her triumph without fighting. . . . She knows truly, and easily, and immediately, and everlastingly" (Sermon XIX). And the essential point is, for Cummings, that we may achieve this status on earth and without heavenly intervention. (pp. 14-15)

The result is romantic transcendence, and Cummings becomes just another homebred romantic in the domestic tradition of Emerson, Whitman, and the later advocates of strenuous abandon; and Norman Friedman's defense follows familiar, if old-fashioned, academic lines. In the passage just quoted, he seems unaware that the state of beatitude described by Donne can exist only in eternity where the soul functions by pure intuition (like God), since all things are present to it, being freed from the temporal condition which requires the aid of discursive reason. Translated into temporal terms, such a doctrine is the familiar romantic assertion of the superiority of instinct and intuition over reason and will, a state, not of beatitude, but of confusion. "In that region," as J. V. Cunningham says, "the elected of God and the elected of themselves are scarcely distinguishable, and if the true oracle is nonsense to sense, so nonsense is often taken for oracle."

The philosophical and psychological naïveté of a poetry animated by such views is reasonably clear. The pity is that Friedman has expended his very considerable gifts—analytical acuity, a prose style of great clarity, and a mastery of logical exposition—on a poet who is an Ogden Nash for intellectual children and who confuses the typographical cleverness of literary cubism (the sources and influence of which are not examined) with conceptual profundity. If my view of this book, from which I have learned a great deal, is harsh, it is because my view of Cummings is harsh. While no one can escape a residual fondness for Cummings' wit, however dubious its charms, it is surprisingly uncritical to

take him as a serious poet of major rank. Friedman lacks a historical sense of Cummings' position in our literature: he is the contemporary counterpart of some frivolous emblem poet or writer of anagrams and picture poems, one of Alexandrian ingenuity, but finally negligible except as a footnote in the history of literary fashions.

One final matter: the explanation of Cummings' typographical eccentricities is occasionally wrong, as in the poem "mOOn Over tOWns mOOn," quoted on page 41. In the first eight lines, the letter *O* is always upper case, other letters lower case. The procedure is reversed in the last four lines. The point is that the moon is rising in the first eight lines and is visually much larger than the buildings of the town; in the last lines, the moon has risen (not disappeared) and is visually smaller. So the visually diminished moon, grown great in spirit (not the ghost of a moon that has set), presides over the last lines.

CHARLES GULLANS

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The Literature of the Middle Ages. By W. T. H. JACKSON. New York: Columbia University Press, 1960. Pp. xiii + 432. \$6.00.

It is difficult to evaluate a book of this type. To attempt to cover the literature of the High Middle Ages, defined here as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, would be risky under any conditions, even with the further restrictions Jackson imposes upon himself. To attempt to cover the period in some 430 pages had to be disastrous; yet a modicum of success could have been achieved by good organization, precision, and brevity. Jackson's book, which must, of course, be heralded as the first of its kind in English, leaves much to be desired in all three categories.

In the preface and introduction, a sort of *captatio benevolentiae*, he tells us that the book fulfills a need "by providing the information necessary to read medieval literature with pleasure and understanding," but that it must of necessity reflect the personal tastes of the author. He concentrates on major works and appends a chronological list of works and authors and a bibliography: "The bibliographical material is substantial and offers the means to study medieval literature in considerable detail." Following the author's own statement as to emphasis, let us examine these three aspects of the work: information on medieval literature, chronology, and bibliographical information. Because of the necessary brevity of this review, I shall be able to discuss only a few passages which I consider characteristic of the work.

In the section on Gottfried's *Tristan*, an area where he must be supposed to have special competence,¹ Jackson is unforgivably cavalier with the facts. Isolde is not called Yseult by Thomas and Gottfried, as he maintains on page 140. Rivalin is not wounded in a tournament at Mark's court; he is not killed in an adventure, and the child Tristan is not driven from his lands. Tristan (in the Tantris episode) is not "blown by the winds to Ireland," but goes there to get cured, and Isolde is never "condemned to death by burning." A really shocking passage is: "As usual with medieval authors, we know virtually nothing about the man Gottfried von Strassburg. He gives *his* [italics mine] name and that

¹ He has previously published on the subject; see W. T. H. Jackson, "The Role of Brangaene in Gottfried's *Tristan*," *Germanic Review*, XXVIII (1953), 290-96; and his "Gottfried von Strassburg," in R. S. Loomis, *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 145-56.

of his [unidentified] patron Dietrich in an acrostic at the beginning of his poem. . . ." The G at the beginning of the first strophe of the poem may be Gottfried's initial, but this is conjecture; cf. Ehrismann, II, 2, 1, p. 299: "Aus seinem [Gottfried's] Werke erfahren wir nicht einmal seinen Namen. . . ."

Nor is Jackson to be trusted in chronological matters. Though he cites Levy's *Chronologie approximative de la littérature française du moyen âge* (ZrPh., Beiheft 98 [1957]), he did not follow this work in setting up his chronology. In dealing with Konrad's *Rolandslied*, for example, he says: "... written by a priest called Konrad at the court of Henry the Proud and his successor, Henry the Lion, was probably completed by 1139." He offers elsewhere 1131 or 1170 as the date of the work. It is cutting the Gordian knot with a vengeance to have the work written at both courts, since scholars are at variance on the matter; but Henry the Proud died in 1139 and Henry the Lion became Duke of Saxony in 1142, of Bavaria in 1156, so that the *Rolandslied* could not have been written at both courts and have been finished by 1139. Most modern authorities consider the reference to *di edele herzoginne, eines richen kuninges barn* to be a reference to Henry the Lion's wife Mathilde, daughter of Henry II of England, who was twelve years old (still a *barn*) when he married her in 1168.

It is in bibliographical matters, however, that Jackson's irresponsibility is most evident. For example, he cites on page 27: "Important works on Josaphat are: E. W. A. Kuh, Barlaam und Joasaph, eine bibliographisch-literargeschichtliche Studie (1893); St. John Damascene, Barlaam und Iosaph (read Ioasaph), with Eng. trans. by G. R. Woodward and H. Mattingley (1914)." The work by Kuh cited here is actually by Ernst Kuhn; it appeared not in 1893, but in 1897, and any student who attempted to find the work by Jackson's citation would be doomed to failure, since it appeared in the *Abhandlungen der Bairischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. Kuhn's work is now superseded by: Hiram Peri (Pflaum), *Der Religionsdisput der Barlaam-Legende: Ein Motiv abendländischer Dichtung* (Acta Salmanticensia: Filosofía y letras, XIV [1959], 3).² Woodward and Mattingley's work is a Loeb Classical Library volume. Jackson cites works usually only by date rather than giving full bibliographical data, a practice which does not recommend itself in a book designed for laymen.

In his bibliography proper, which is "arranged to facilitate the further study of medieval literature," numerous errors, both of omission and commission, seem designed to confuse rather than help. He sends the student to Bossuat for medieval French literature (a good choice), to Körner for medieval German literature! Körner's bibliography, good as it is, is not a bibliography of medieval German literature, and it is not on the same level as Bossuat; Ehrismann and the *Verfasserlexikon* serve as the Bossuat for German. Hansel's *Bücherkunde für Germanisten* should have been listed under "Bibliographical Reference Works" rather than "Bibliographies of Literature." Under "Bibliographical Reference Works" certainly L.-N. Malclès, *Les Sources du travail bibliographique*, 3 parts (Geneva, 1950-58), easily the best of the lot, deserves mention. It hurts to see an old friend such as the Dietrich referred to as "Bibliographie der fremdsprachigen Literatur." The "H. P. Anderson" referred to as the author of the "Bibliography of Scandinavian Philology" is actually two persons, Harry and Poul Andersen, and the bibliography is a continuing one. Under "History and Cultural Background," Jackson cites "Anderson, G. K. *The*

² See R. Levy's review, *Speculum*, XXXV (October, 1960), 654-56: "Henceforth it will supersede the one which Ernst Kuhn published in *Abh.*, etc."

History of the Anglo-Saxons. 1949." I have been unable to find this work and assume that he is referring to Anderson's *The Literature of the Anglo-Saxons*. His characterization of the *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen* scarcely does justice to that journal: "Prints current bibliographical information in each issue, in the form of tables of contents of individual journals."

Many omissions are noted. He mentions the bibliography of comparative literature by Baldensperger and Friederich, but does not mention the periodical continuation in *YCGL*. If Eppelsheimer's bibliography of German literature is to be mentioned, so too should the continuations of it by Köttelwesch, as well as the companion volume for French literature by O. Klapp. For Spanish literature, certainly R. Foulché-Delbosc and L. Barrau-Dihigo, *Manuel de l'hispanisant*, 2 vols. (New York, 1920-25), must be mentioned. On paleography, Keller's *Angelsächsische Palaeographie*, Kirchner's *Germanistische Handschriftenpraxis*, and Bischoff's *Paläographie* (in Stammler's *Aufriss*) are surprisingly absent. On the history of Anglo-Saxon England, he mentions Whitelock's *Penguin Book*, but neglects the authority in the field, Sir Frank Stenton.

Actually, the bibliography is a disconnected *quodlibet*, frequently incorrect, frequently ill-chosen. Much space could have been gained and more information conveyed to the reader by citing a few well-chosen works and explaining their use. In such a work, only a critical and annotated bibliography makes sense. And, above all, a bibliography for the use of nonspecialists should be accurate and give the necessary detail.

I hope that I have not seemed to be niggling in pointing out these few errors among the many which could have been cited. It should be in a book review as in law: *de minimis non curat censor*; but these small errors are symptomatic of larger ones, which are perhaps matters of taste. The sum total of these considerations must be that this is a book which is unworthy of Jackson's reputation as a medievalist. The idea was good, the execution poor.

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Rainer Maria Rilke: Masks and the Man. By H. F. PETERS. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1960. Pp. xii + 226. \$5.75.

H. F. Peters (who is professor of German and comparative literature at Portland State College) offers two reasons for making this study: first, to "show Rilke's impact on modern poetry," and second, to "present Rilke's poetry to the English-speaking reader in such a form that he will be stirred to read it" (p. ix).

The first chapter bears the intriguing title "Tonight in China" (taken from a line of W. H. Auden's Twenty-third Sonnet, from *In Time of War*). In it, Peters shows how Rilke's fame and influence spread from Germany to France and then to England; how men and women in Italy, Poland, Spain, Denmark, and Russia devoted their talents to him; and how, by the forties, he had won an audience in America. The number of translations of his poems continues to increase in many countries; in Japan alone no fewer than eleven different translations were published during the year 1951-1952.

As to Peters' second reason for producing his book on Rilke, it would seem that a poet who has been translated into all the major languages and a good

many minor ones—such as Croatian, Czech, Bulgarian, and Finnish—hardly needs to be presented to the English-speaking reader “in such a form that he will be stirred to read it.” Many students and lovers of poetry have known Rilke’s poems prior to 1960, the publication date of this book. Perhaps the “great emotion” (p. ix) Rilke brought into Peters’ life had to find expression, and thus inspired him to write this praiseworthy book.

Rilke has fascinated and enthralled readers and critics almost from the time his first poems appeared, and the literature about him has grown to stupendous proportions. It will undoubtedly continue to grow as long as men lend a willing ear to “the voice of a universal spirit” (p. 187).

What is the secret of Rilke’s universal appeal? How can one explain the fact that the German soldiers carried with them into the trenches copies of *Die Weise von Liebe und Tod des Cornets Christoph Rilke*, and, by contrast, the other equally interesting fact that the most sophisticated reading public, as well as literary critics, continue to puzzle over passages of his *Duineser Elegien* and his *Sonette an Orpheus*? Peters finds an answer in Rilke’s appealing idea that “a turning point will come” eventually to those who will not allow themselves to “be overwhelmed by despair” (p. 16). However, Rilke is not read for his ideas alone—no poet is—but also because he is a superb lyrical poet. Peters examines Rilke’s *œuvre*, but with some presumably unavoidable omissions. *Das Marienleben*, for example, is dismissed simply by quoting from one of Rilke’s letters to his publishers in which he said that *The Life of Mary* was fashioned in inspired marginal hours during the time when he was writing the first *Elegies* at Duino castle.

Peters concludes that there are three reasons for the Rilke-cult. His first reason—that Rilke not only wrote poetry, but also lived it—does not seem too valid, for there are others, such as Stefan George, who also have “lived” poetry and who nevertheless are far from gaining the wide following which Rilke enjoys. Second, he asserts that “Rilke’s poetry reflects the ambiguity of modern man” (p. 192). Third, he maintains that Rilke represents a “blending of East and West, a radical return from the surface to the depth of life, an insistence on the need to understand and accept rather than suppress and deny the irrational forces that shape our destinies” (p. 193). With a part of this third reason, i.e., the “insistence . . . to understand . . . the irrational forces,” Peters comes close to existentialism.

But this threefold conclusion explains only partially the universal appeal of Rilke’s poetry. In fact, Rilke himself, averse as he was to critical interpretation because he believed in the redeeming power of the poetic word alone, gave us the key when he asked for “like-mindedness.” The poet must have realized that this is not easily attained, for he added to his *Sonnets* notes which are designed to help the reader understand some of the more obscure passages.

The title of Peters’ book, *Masks and the Man*, is well-chosen; the word “mask” is significant in Rilke’s poetry, the mask that “serves a dual purpose: it conceals and it reveals” (p. 27). And Peters succeeds admirably in shedding much-needed light on Rilkean connotations for some of the poet’s other favorite words, for example, “mirror,” “island,” “contradiction,” “relation,” “doll.” He points out that these words, as Rilke uses them, are at once “complex, ambiguous, and yet . . . strikingly simple” (p. 132). In a very direct manner, he leads the reader of Rilke as close to the meaning of the poetry as he can without dissecting it beyond reason.

Peters’ fair treatment of the various interpretations of Rilke must also be

counted among his accomplishments. This is especially true when he speaks of Rilke as a poet who arouses religious emotions. Such objectivity is not surprising in the book of a man whose scholarship is sound and who has given us a humane, humanistic study of Rilke without any hagiographical overtones.

Appended to the book is a chronology of Rilke's life which is a miniature biography of the poet. It gives a year-by-year account of his restless travels and the dates of writing and publication of his works. Peters also provides a short selective bibliography (annotated with one or two sentences describing each entry), an index of names, and a list of Rilke's works (with English, German, and French titles). The translations of Rilke's poems as quoted by Peters are taken mostly from Leishman and Spender, with some changes made by Peters, as he states in his preface.

The University of Washington Press is to be praised for this beautiful edition. Some misprints, however, are to be noted: p. 32, read "hinzuschau" for "hinzuschau"; p. 42, "war" for "ware"; p. 119, "Lenden" for "Lenden"; p. 145, "nicht" for "nich."

If I were asked to recommend a single volume as an aid to reading Rilke, I should choose Peters' *Rainer Maria Rilke: Masks and the Man*, for the author gives clear and careful explanations of many of Rilke's condensed images. For this and for other reasons mentioned in this review, his book is a reliable and sympathetic guide.

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Le Sentiment de la nature et le retour à la vie simple (1690-1740). By GEOFFROY ATKINSON. Genève: Librairie E. Droz; Paris: Librairie Minard, Société de Publications romanes et françaises, LXVI, 1960. Pp. 89. Fr.s 8.-; post free, \$2.00.

Friends and admirers of the late Geoffroy Atkinson will read *Le Sentiment de la nature et le retour à la vie simple (1690-1740)* with sadness and delight. The solid scholarship which they know from his earlier works, such as *Les Nouveaux horizons de la renaissance française*, appears here in its most mature form; but the knowledge that this independent mind will cease to stimulate students of French letters with fresh ideas will be painful to accept. The freewheeling master from Amherst, who died in November, 1960, has here left the scholarly world a book which, by its balance, clarity, and gentle sense of humor, will make a deep impression on those interested in the development of ideas.

The questions which Atkinson asks in this book are among those to which there are no ready answers. Why were the principal French authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Parisians (by adoption if not by birth), whereas those of the sixteenth century had mostly been provincials? How and why did the transformation, of which everyone is aware, in men's feeling toward nature come about? What, in general, is the process by which such a revolution in thought makes itself felt? Are the beginnings made by the great writers and thinkers, or is the way paved by men of lesser stature, the great merely expressing with power and beauty what the others already felt and said in more halting or less lofty terms? If the latter is the case—as Atkinson believes, on the basis of the material in this book—in what sense may the great be said to be leaders? There are stubborn paradoxes in these speculations, some of which, it is to be

hoped, will be dealt with further in the two remaining volumes of this study, to be published in due course under the supervision of Mrs. Atkinson.

Meanwhile, it is enough to say that, seasoned scholar that he was, no contradiction, problem, or paradox escaped G. Atkinson's notice. His good-natured awareness of them all disarms the most critical reader, who needs only one chapter to understand that objections or reservations which he raises as he converses with the author will be clearly stated, and usually with grace and charm, by Atkinson himself a few pages farther on.

Among the many observations which students of French literature will find profitable and provocative, the following may be mentioned. The nobles in England enjoyed living on their estates; the French nobility, on the other hand, came to prefer life in Paris. The influence of England in the matter of appreciating nature, though likely, reinforced feelings already present, rather than introduced new sentiments. The love of nature which began its long and strong reign in the period examined by Atkinson was not new; rather, its large-scale suspension during the Age of Louis XIV is what is to be wondered at, for men have never ceased to love nature—in the sense that we ordinarily understand the term. The revival of the love of outdoor nature in the eighteenth century is associated neither with the optimism of the philosophes nor with Christianity. The "sentiment de la nature" in France was in large measure a class phenomenon—a concomitant of the growth of the bourgeoisie in the century of the Enlightenment.

It has long been known that the eighteenth century witnessed the simultaneous growth of rationalism and sentimentalism, sometimes in the same bosom. We are still far from a full appreciation of the social, intellectual, and artistic processes and causes of these phenomena, but Atkinson's concern with them, his easy presentation of relevant texts, and his sober comments will prove an important enrichment to our thinking. His urbane method, at once scholarly and creative, objective and personal, is a joy to live with. Presented with this book of less than 100 pages, many scholars may easily miss the elegance and seriousness of Atkinson's thought and style. But as has happened over the years with *Les Nouveaux horizons*, students of literature and thought are likely to grow into this book and find in it a rich fund of ideas, a lively, fresh way of thinking, and a man of originality and depth who will not soon be forgotten by his students, friends, or readers.

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André Gide and the Communist Temptation. By GEORGES I. BRACHFELD.
Genève: Librairie E. Droz; Paris: Librairie Minard, 1959. Pp. 147. Fr.s. 16.-.

The relation of the title of a book to its content is, as everyone knows, sometimes remote, and this present work is a case in point. The author has traced the moral evolution of Gide, which, in its early stage, consisted of the humanitarian revolt of the young "grand bourgeois" against the society and, more particularly, against the privileged social circle to which he belonged. It continued through several channels or symbols: the Devil, African colonialism, Woman, and finally blossomed into "l'Evangile éternel," of which Communism was a passing phase.

Gide never abandoned his concept of "l'Evangile éternel," that is to say, the image of Christ as a flimsy garment covering his aspirations and charitable

deeds, constituting a religion without churches and preferably without God. It led him to embrace the Communist cause from 1929 until 1932 and even longer (p. 124), but to refrain from joining the Party. In other words, Gide was, for a time, a heterodox Communist. The title would encourage the reader to believe that this latter state of affairs is the subject of this monograph, although actually it forms only a minor part of the fifth chapter; the main one consists of a broad view of French twentieth-century history little relevant to the question. The work itself, as a eulogy of Gide, will please his admirers; the close knowledge of Gide's text will retain the attention and interest of others, especially at the beginning.

Some of the implications and assertions Brachfeld makes are questionable, and one error should be pointed out. Were the "detractors" of Gide—for example, C. E. Magny and Denis de Rougemont (p. 45)—as naïve as Brachfeld makes them appear when they supposedly turned against Gide, using a logic they well knew he impugned, namely, his declaration that the best ruse of the Devil is making men believe he does not exist? Moreover, the author declares that "The Devil as an explanatory myth remains a most useful concept to help us understand Gide's thoughts and works" (p. 47). One may wonder if he was so useful.

A myth to be believable needs not only the inner urgency of its creator, which Gide possessed, but also an imagination, plastic or otherwise, with which to clothe it or to warm it up; this, perhaps, Gide did not care to employ. Hence, a mere abstraction, such as Evil, might have done as well. Gide's Satan, needless to say, is proteiform and an embodiment of the various forms assumed by Evil. As a moralist, Gide analyzed the works of the Devil, but always from a distance. Yet, since collaboration with the Evil One is essential to Gidean aesthetics, he at times lends himself to "le Malin," whose main avatar is the flesh (p. 48).

Brachfeld warns that, although Gide's attitude toward Woman was ambivalent (p. 77), he clearly implies that Woman was another avatar of Satan. Indeed, Gide recognizes that many women do possess the "Christian virtues"; but women also represent society, and they exert considerable influence on the self-realization of their husbands—and Madeleine is no exception. Brachfeld makes it especially clear that Gide considers Woman to be evil when he reports that Gide had Christ on the Cross say to Mary, "Femme! qu'y a-t-il de commun entre toi et moi?" (p. 107). Here, Brachfeld, by not commenting on the quotation, shows his egalitarianism: according to him, Gide has the right to change the words and, at least in this instance, the spirit of the Gospels as he pleases, for Christianity is only one of the mythologies (p. 96). That position is defensible, but not conducive to a common language. Those who believe in the "Judaean-Christian fact," or in God, might be granted a *ius civitatis*, although they may be in the minority, since the aphorism "God is dead" is not yet a scientific fact.

One might also question the representation of the "Camelots du Roi" as rowdies. They may well have been something else also, since the observation was made that, between the two world wars, the political assassinations in France were made against them, the rightists, whereas in Germany they "occurred" against the center and the left (Rathenau, Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg). Moreover, we are given to understand that, about 1920, "As Communist cells sprang up in France, Rightist Leagues formed to counter their action. Foremost among them was Charles Maurras' *Action Française*" (p. 118). But *L'Action Française* had been formed thirty years earlier, and not against the Communists, a discrepancy of some importance in a panorama covering sixty

years. It had already been active in 1917 when Léon Daudet collaborated with Clémenceau in fighting defeatism and "Le Bonnet Rouge."

Enid Starkie said that she called on André Gide in order to further her wisdom, and that, after a few moments of conversation, the Master gave her the impression of the cat in *Alice in Wonderland*, which gradually fades away, until only the smile is left. This will happen here to the reader who will fix his gaze upon Gide and Communism. It may not operate on everyone, but this is the evanescent charm of the book.

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